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C. B. den
July 1927

HISTORY OF THE 60TH DIVISION



JERUSALEM

HISTORY OF THE 60TH DIVISION

(2/2ND LONDON DIVISION)

BY
COLONEL P. H. DALBIAC, C.B., T.D.

WITH FOREWORDS BY
FIELD-MARSHAL VISCOUNT ALLENBY, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

AND
GENERAL SIR E. S. BULFIN, K.C.B., C.V.O.

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FOREWORD

BY

FIELD-MARSHAL VISCOUNT ALLENBY, G.C.B., G.C.M.G.

It was in France, in 1915,
when Commanding The Third Army,
that I first made the acquaintance
of the 60th Indian Division and
learned to admire its fighting qualities.

In the Summer of 1917, while
I was engaged in planning the
Palestine Campaign, I was delighted
by the arrival in the Sinai Peninsula
of the 60th Division still under the
Command of my old friend Sir
Edward Bulfin. He assumed
Command of The XXI Corps,
and the Division came under the
leadership of Sir John Shea.

In the ensuing Campaign, it
worthily maintained and added
to its reputation.

In 1918, a cruel blow fell.
Owing to exigencies of War, it became
necessary to break up the old
Division. The heroes of Beersheba,

Jerusalem, Jericho and the Jordan
were called & other fields.

This blow might well have
destroyed the spirit of the 60th
Division. But no such thing hap-
-pened. Of the old members,
a nucleus remained; and a new
Division arose, like a young Phoenix
from its mother's ashes. Vigorous
and eager, with all the old fire, it
went on to further victories; and found
the road, through the Vale of Sharon,
to Damascus and Aleppo.

In devotion & duty, in cheerful
endurance of hardship, in determined
courage, these fine soldiers have
never been surpassed.

I shall be ^{never} ~~insecure~~ proud
that I had the honour of being
so long and closely associated
with the 60th London Division.

Atterbury
of. Gen.

Cairo.
11. IV. 21.

FOREWORD

BY

GENERAL SIR E. S. BULFIN, K.C.B., C.V.O.

I WELL remember on a grey, wet morning in June 1916, as the 60th London Division filed past me at Sutton-Veny on their way to embark at Southampton for the front, I noted the young animated faces and admirable bearing of the men, and none thought or cared whither that first march would lead them. It led them, we now know, through France, Flanders, across to Salonika, up to Lake Doiran, reflecting in its still waters the surrounding snow-clad Balkans; down to embark for Alexandria, and the heat and sands of Egypt. Up to Gaza and Beersheba in Palestine, and painfully toiling up through the Judean hills, to take a leading part in the capture of that city of terrible tragedies—Jerusalem. Then down the steep and dusty road to Jordan, and across into the land of Moab. Returning to Jerusalem to reorganise, seven battalions being sent back to France, and five remaining to help in the final overthrow of the Turkish and German forces at the Battle of Sharon.

At one time it seemed as if the adventurous wanderings of this splendid Division would silently sink into oblivion; but now, in spite of many disappointments and vicissitudes, an historian has appeared to record the deeds and achievements, under such varied conditions, of this typical London Division.

Colonel P. H. Dalbiac, C.B., T.D., who joined the 60th when it was first formed at the White City, and by his marked administrative ability helped the Division materially in France and Salonika, has earned our deep gratitude by renouncing his well-earned leisure to grapple with the mass of documents, reports, and diaries, and now

presents this History. The Division owes to this able and devoted officer a heavy debt of gratitude.

When I took over command of the 60th London Division at Bishop's Stortford in December 1915 from that fine soldier, Major-General Thomas Calley, C.B., C.B.E., M.V.O., he told me that the 60th had been bled white by the many calls on it by its first-line Division, the 47th, then fighting in France. All the best N.C.O.s and men had gone to the 47th, but so great was the vitality and spirit of the 60th, that in a couple of months on Salisbury Plain I knew I had a Division second to none.

The divisional esprit de corps was a strong and vigorous growth, which astonished and delighted me, and it was due in a great measure to the efforts of my most admirable staff, but chiefly to Brigadier-General E. T. Humphreys, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O., and Colonel Pulteney Malcolm, M.V.O., D.S.O. (Indian Army). I never made a call on this splendid Division that was not responded to with unfailing alacrity, but the zenith of the Divisional reputation was reached under that brilliant leader, General Sir John Shea, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., in Palestine, who succeeded me in the command of the 60th on August 7, 1917.

All, whatever their unit, corps, or department, who shared in the actions of the 60th Division herein recorded, must for ever feel the great truth so admirably expressed by our great national poet, Kipling :

God be thanked ! What ere comes after,
I have lived and toiled with—men.

EDWARD S. BULFIN,
General.

WALMER, KENT,
December 19, 1926.

AUTHOR'S PREFACE

I FEEL that some apology is due to the many subscribers for the belated appearance of the *History of the 60th Division* ; as well as to all those who served with the Division, and have been waiting to welcome a record of their great deeds, and all that they went through for their accomplishment. Some four or five years ago the compilation of the work was entrusted to Mr. Edward Fraser, who at that time had a good deal of literary work on hand, and was consequently unable to give his whole attention to the work. However, he found time to collect a considerable amount of valuable material, but, unfortunately, before he had time to put it into shape his health completely broke down and he was compelled to abandon the work.

When I was asked in August last to undertake the work, I was in the happy position of finding the foundation well and truly laid by Mr. Fraser, and my task was a comparatively light one. All the material he had collected was placed at my disposal, as well as his own voluminous notes. The first ten chapters had been made into shape, and only required transcribing with a few additions and corrections ; for the remainder, if any credit is due or censure merited, I am alone responsible.

My best thanks are due to all who have kindly assisted me and borne with my perpetual demands for information on matters which, after the lapse of years, they themselves were scarcely positive about. From General Sir Edward Bulfin I have had every encouragement and many kind suggestions, while for the loan of books, documents, and other valuable information I am much indebted to Brigadier-General Da Costa, Colonel Dowsett, Major Bevington, Major Cooper Willis, Major Edwards, Captain Docwra Rogers, Captain Charrington, and a host of others.

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For permission to quote, and for the use of maps, I am indebted to the O.C. London Scottish, Colonel Warde-Aldam, Major Barry, Mr. Bernard Blaser, and Messrs. Constable & Co. Space, in many cases contradiction in various personal accounts, and other considerations have compelled the omission of much that is worthy of record ; but my efforts have been throughout directed to making the History as fair and even a record as possible of the doings of all the units of the Division, and if I have failed in any respect I can only appeal for forgiveness through the memory of the esprit de corps and good comradeship which always prevailed in the old days, and which I hope will always be recalled with pride by all who had the good luck and the honour to serve in "The Immortal 60th."

P. H. DALBIAC.

December 19, 1926.

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ADDENDA

p. 223.

Under 180th Brigade also include 2/2nd Guides and 2/30th Punjabis.

NOTE TO APPENDIX II.

p. 241.

This was originally intended to date as May, 1918, when the nine Battalions were taken away from the Division and sent to France.

This date was subsequently changed, but owing to difficulties of revision several errors occur in the List.



ILLUSTRATIONS

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History of the 60th Division

CHAPTER I

THE RAISING OF THE 60TH DIVISION

THE 60th Division came into existence in September 1914. It was originally formed, as the 2nd London (Reserve) Division, from the immense overflow of recruits for the 2nd London Territorial Division, who had come forward in response to Lord Kitchener's call to arms of August 10th, inviting the Territorials to volunteer for service overseas. Lord Esher, President of the Territorial Force for the County of London, toward the end of August made the proposal to the War Office, that second units should be raised to form reserve formations to supply drafts to the two London Divisions; both of which had volunteered for service overseas. The offer was accepted, and an appeal was issued at the end of the month calling for thirty thousand volunteers. Within a week the numbers asked for were exceeded; and in addition to large numbers of those who were unable to join the first line, owing to their establishments being complete, many who had formerly served rejoined.

The organisation of all arms and branches began in the first week of September; Colonel E. W. D. Baird, with the rank of Brigadier-General, was appointed, temporarily, to exercise general control and supervision as far as the rudimentary conditions permitted.

Units adopted the same numbers and titles as the corresponding units of the 2nd London Territorial Division, differentiated only by the figure "2" being prefixed to their number in each case. Thus, for instance, 2/13, 2/14

to 2/24 for the twelve infantry battalions ; 2/5, 2/6, and 2/7 for Field Artillery Brigades ; and in like manner for the Engineer Companies, Train and Field Ambulance sections. The Infantry Brigades until February 1916 retained the first-line Brigade numbers of 4th, 5th, and 6th (London) Reserve Infantry Brigades respectively.

Recruit drills and preliminary training exercises were carried out during the first three weeks, in most cases at Head-quarters of the original 1st Battalions, and in open spaces in and around London. All ranks, with few exceptions, living at their homes and mustering at their Head-quarters daily, for training.

The first great difficulty which the newly raised units had to meet was the provision of Instructors. The first line, training to go overseas at the earliest possible date, were in Hertfordshire, whither they had proceeded in August, required all their officers and non-commissioned officers to train their own recruits. Fortunately, a good many retired officers and non-commissioned officers, many of whom had served in the Regular Army, rejoined, and supplied the bulk of the instructors required ; but squads of recruits were inordinately large, and work could have been found for many more capable of imparting instruction.

Uniforms, arms, equipment, and stores were not available for several weeks, and when they did come, came only in dribblets. All parades at first took place in ordinary civilian garb ; later on as uniforms, or portions of uniforms, began to be issued, it was no uncommon sight to see men in wonderful mixed attire. Puttees, check trousers, a frock coat, and a service cap, or perhaps a tunic and a tall hat. However, whatever the dress worn the work went steadily on.

The 2/14th (London Scottish) was the first battalion enrolled, and the only one able to provide rifles of their own in the early days. .

The divisional Artillery was formed in September, as the 2/5th, 2/6th, and 2/7th Artillery Brigades ; with Head-

THE RAISING OF THE 60TH DIVISION 19

quarters at Kennington, Brixton, and Putney respectively. Their early training was much hampered by difficulties in obtaining material of every kind. The Ordnance Department, for the time, had no means of assisting. All its energies had to be directed towards making good losses suffered during the retreat from Mons, and supplying the new Army units.

The divisional Artillery units had to purchase washing line and rope for use as drag-ropes, and make for themselves dummy wooden guns, mounted on ordinary hand-carts with wooden sights, rocking-bar sights, and elevating and traversing gear.

Training in mounted drill was managed on foot, with men to represent horses, battery waggons, and first-line waggons. In spite of all this, so much was accomplished, thanks to the energy and keenness of all ranks, that when, eventually, horses were issued, the personnel were so well advanced that they were able, with little further training, to bring their guns into action and keep intervals ; besides being satisfactorily proficient in the handling of ammunition supply both in advance and in retirement.

General von Donop, the head of the Army Ordnance Department, was so pleased with the work accomplished that he wrote : " God helps those who help themselves. I will see that you have the first guns available for issue."

No guns could be spared until February 1915, when the batteries were fitted with 15-pounders, and the first practice camp was formed. It was not until the late autumn of the year that 18-pounders could be supplied.

The Royal Engineer companies were raised by Colonel R. Q. Henriques, who came from the first-line Division early in September. Head-quarters were at the Duke of York's School, Chelsea. By means of advertisements (posters and the aid of local theatres, cinemas, etc.) for artisans and volunteers from engineering trades and applications to various works, Pearson's and Mowlem's in particular, a promising set of recruits were obtained. Picks

and shovels were procured on loan from various firms, and horses collected by driblets from all quarters ; a number being lent for drill purposes by the London Territorial Force Association. The authorities could furnish no forage, and it had to be obtained by purchase through private arrangements. For the medical examination of recruits a North London doctor volunteered his services, and he, with Colonel Henriques, practically carried out the whole of the work between them ; no light task. Two out of every three of the first batches of recruits had to be rejected for physical defects ; their places were, however, satisfactorily filled in due course.

Numbers of men with engineering experience in the Colonies and Dominions, and from various countries overseas who had shipped for England to lend a hand on the outbreak of war—they hailed from India, Canada, South Africa, Mexico, Argentine, Chile—from all over the world, in fact—came forward ; the greater number as applicants for commissions. As with other units, no uniforms, equipment or *matériel* was forthcoming for some time. Preliminary training, lectures, and drills were carried on at Head-quarters daily, with route marching and exercises in Hyde Park as opportunity offered.

Military engineering works such as bridge-building was managed on the barrack square with what timber and appliances could be procured locally.

By November four companies, each two hundred and fifty strong, had been formed and officered ; one of which was sent to join the first-line Division at St. Albans, and also a signal company.

The raising of the Train, as the 2nd London (Reserve) T. and S. Column, commenced on September 14th at Head-quarters at the Duke of York's School, Chelsea, under Colonel P. H. Dalbiac, C.B., who had raised the first-line Train in 1908 ; about a thousand recruits presented themselves within the first ten days, and by the end of the month the Train was up to establishment as regards rank

and file. As regards instructors, besides the C.O., there was at the start but one officer of the first line and one N.C.O. Two officers and one N.C.O. had been ordered to be sent from the first line—an order which was never complied with. Among those who joined, however, were a certain number of old soldiers and some ex-N.C.O.s of the Territorial Force, and training was soon set going in satisfactory style.

During October some fifteen horses were received, mostly casters and rejected animals, but in spite of that progress was soon made in the riding school.

At the end of November Colonel Morgan, the chief of the new Purchasing Department, made application to the C.O. for help in collecting forage in Hertfordshire.

Waggons were obtained from a weird collection of old civilian waggons of every conceivable description at Deptford; and from a warehouse of old well-worn harness, at the same place, Saddler Sergeant Cox, an old cavalry N.C.O., contrived to put together fifty serviceable sets of harness. More cast and rejected horses were collected, a company formed and sent to Radlett, under command of Captain Blake.

The company remained at work at Radlett until the following February, when the men rejoined Headquarters; Captain Blake being transferred to Colonel Morgan's Purchasing staff. The horses, waggons, and harness were, by Colonel Morgan's directions, sold at Watford. Two years later the Ordnance authorities made an effort to convert these into "deficiencies," and claimed some £1,500 from the Train, which it is needless to say they did not obtain.

"Our days at Chelsea," Captain Docwra Rogers writes, "were spent in drill on the barrack square and in route marches, in common with many other newly formed units. Later a few heavy draught horses arrived, many of those who afterwards had to deal with mules, and perhaps even camels, learned their first lessons in grooming. Another of

our early joys were the riding school, where officers and men alike came the accustomed croppers, and were accordingly 'told off' by the riding instructor.

"We had no supplies to transport, and no waggons in which to transport them; these latter, however, arrived just before Christmas, and were of the ordinary Midland Railway type. It was not until six months later that we got the genuine G.S. article.

"Waggon drill, however, was carried on without waggons long before the first waggons arrived, in the following manner: seven men were detailed to form a complete outfit; two were the horses, behind them was one man for the driver, and behind him the remaining four men represented the wheels of the waggon. It was thanks to this makeshift arrangement that those subalterns who eventually presented themselves for a course of training at Aldershot were not entirely novices in the mysteries of waggon drill."

A concentration of six of the Infantry battalions at the White City, Shepherd's Bush, took place in October. Four battalions, the 2/14th, 2/16th, 2/20th, and 2/21st, continued at their own Head-quarters. Brigadier-General T. C. P. Calley, C.B., M.V.O., late of the 1st Life Guards, who had for four years (1908-1912) commanded the London Mounted Brigade, was appointed at the same time to take command of and organise the Division.

He had literally to create and shape, by his own energy and efforts, a complete division. He established his Head-quarters at the White City, where Brigadier-General Baird took over charge as O.C. troops.

Little, or no, assistance could be given by the War Office authorities, whose whole attention at the moment was absorbed in the formation of "Kitchener's Army." The London Territorial Association, however, in spite of the overwhelming mass of work thrown upon them, rendered all possible assistance and support.

General Calley, on the morning that the Divisional Head-quarters were opened at the White City, found that

all the officials at Whitehall had provided for him was a table and a chair in an otherwise empty room. The General had to put his hand in his pocket and send out to the nearest stationer's shop to buy paper, pens, and ink for himself and his staff to start work with.

The officers at the White City were quartered mainly in the art galleries, with the Welcome Club for their mess. As one of them describes: "We lived like fighting-cocks at a very moderate charge." The men's quarters and messes were the machinery and other of the large exhibition halls. "Every day the battalions were allotted grounds for exercise. Wormwood Scrubs was, so to speak, the 'Home Paddock,' and many hours were spent there, on those November and December days slithering about on that unattractive mudheap. Other places which witnessed the early efforts of the Division to learn how to become soldiers were Hampstead Heath (a tiring march), Hyde Park, Regent's Park, Barnes Common, Richmond Park, and Bushey Park. The marches to the various open spaces of London were varied by excursions to the neighbourhood of Epping Forest to dig trenches, which, in the event of the Germans landing, were to guard London.

"The train journeys from and back to the White City were quite exciting, as the trains took most curious routes through stations one had never heard of. The blinds were always drawn, and no lights allowed on the return journey.

"Christmas Day," to continue the same officer's account, "was a day never to be forgotten. A large proportion of officers and men were going on leave that evening; the first leave that had been granted. Under these circumstances the battalions were in high spirits when they marched out in the morning. Then came the sudden blow. Just after the luncheon interval, officers arrived in the greatest state of excitement, at the various exercising grounds; most of them in commandeered motors. 'All leave stopped,' was the order everywhere. All battalions, it was announced, were authorised to commandeer trains

in order to proceed to the Tower as soon as possible, where, on arrival, they were to draw arms and ammunition. Of course until then none of the battalions had possessed either. We were then to get back to the White City at the earliest possible moment, and be ready for eventualities.

“The general excitement was intense. Here was war indeed coming near! Imagination was lively on that day. Not a few saw themselves spending Christmas Day in those very trenches we had dug near Epping, waiting to fight; perhaps even fighting the Germans!

“We set off without loss of time for the Tower, and local stations witnessed trains being taken over by troops to the serious dislocation of civilian travellers’ Christmas-eve plans. The Tower was reached in due course, and at the same time it began to drizzle; this, combined as it was with a long dreary wait, soon began to damp the general ardour, which was finally all but extinguished when the handing out of the rifles began. They proved to be only carbines, and no ammunition was forthcoming. After that the return journey began. Tube trains were commandeered at the Bank Station, in order to reach the White City by the quickest route; much, apparently, to the excitement of City workers on their way home.

“Our arrival at Shepherd’s Bush was, indeed, an anti-climax, and the result of it all, there was to be no Christmas leave, except just for one day. One battalion had cause to remember those carbines. When they returned them there was one short. The correspondence that the Ordnance Department started on the subject grew and grew, following the battalion overseas to France and to Salonika, if not indeed to Palestine.

The battalions at the White City remained there until the end of the year when they, together with the battalions who had continued training at their own Head-quarters, left London for billets in towns and villages in the district round Dorking and Reigate in Surrey, and at Maidstone in Kent.

THE RAISING OF THE 60TH DIVISION 25

A considerable advance towards completing the organisation of units was carried out during October, November, and December at the White City, and at the Head-quarters of the battalions which had been training locally. Officers and N.C.O.s who had been sent to Hythe and Sandgate for musketry courses, and to the school at Chelsea Barracks, returned as instructors. Rifle practice followed at once at Rainham, Purfleet, and other ranges within reach of London by short railway journeys ; squads going off to shoot daily.

During these months also drafts of recruits were provided for the first-line battalions in Hertfordshire to replace sick and bring up establishments to strength ; especially for the London Scottish, Kensingtons, and Queen's Westminsters sent to France in September and November to replace casualties.

Uniforms, packs, field equipment, and rifles for drill purposes now also began to be issued to units, and general fitting-out arrangements were completed in preparation for the move from London at the end of the year.

CHAPTER II

TRAINING IN SURREY AND HERTFORDSHIRE

THE Division, less the Artillery, left London at different dates, between the end of December and the middle of January ; concentrating in the Dorking-Reigate area, with two battalions, the Kensingtons and the Queen's Westminsters, for whom no accommodation was available in the area, on detachment at Maidstone. The 2/4th Infantry Brigade had its Headquarters at Dorking ; Divisional Headquarters and the 2/5th Brigade, less one battalion at Betchworth, were at Reigate ; the 2/6th Brigade had Headquarters at Redhill, with two battalions at Horley. The R.E. companies were at Nutfield, where a field was obtained for training in entrenching work.

"The Train," writes Colonel Dalbiac, "on leaving London consisted of twenty-four waggon, with hired horses, and three broken-down motor lorries. In spite of this paucity of material, with the assistance of the regimental transport of the 24th Battalion, loyally placed at their disposal by the C.O., and ably commanded by Lieutenant Moss, the supply and transport of the Division was efficiently carried out, and the approval of Colonel Buist, the A.D. of S. and T., was expressed in a letter to Major Murdoch, the senior Supply officer, commending the manner in which the work had been carried out in the face of great difficulties, not a single hitch or breakdown having occurred."

Speaking of the Transport section that accompanied the two battalions detached to Maidstone, Captain Rogers, who was in charge, as a subaltern, says : "Our depot consisted of about three railway trucks on a siding at Maidstone, and our daily issue was made from these. Bread and forage were purchased from local contractors. Here

we remained for two months, when we returned to Dorking."

The Medical organisation of the Division came into existence when the Division concentrated in the Dorking-Reigate area. It comprised the 2/4th, 2/5th, and 2/6th London Field Ambulances, which each worked, respectively, with the Infantry brigades of similar numbers at Dorking, Reigate, and Redhill. Colonel G. B. Dowsett, formerly commanding the 5th London Field Ambulance, was in command as A.D.M.S. of the Division. "The R.A.M.C.," he records, "were very well up to strength at this early period, but there was a great shortage of medical officers, which continued the whole time the Division was in England."

In the new area units had their first experience of billets, and a hearty welcome met them from the local people everywhere. All available accommodation was taken up, hotels and inns, as well as public buildings and empty houses being utilised, in addition to billets in private dwellings. The Field Ambulances took over houses to form reception stations for sick ; serious cases were sent to one or other of the London hospitals.

Army rationing in kind now took the place of allowances in cash as heretofore. For training, private parks, commons, and village greens in the billeting areas were available. Field training on an enlarged scale was put in hand at once. Brigade and battalion drills and exercises, extended order drills, Swedish drills, daily company running drills, and judging distance practice. Specialist training of all kinds, scouting, signal, and semaphore instruction ; technical lectures for all ranks, field cookery instructional courses, extensive route marches under service conditions, outpost work, varied at intervals by trench-digging on the Surrey hills in connection with the London Southern Defence scheme in case of invasion, went on without intermission, usually under the most adverse weather conditions of a most exceptionally inclement winter.

Colonel Dowsett, referring to the training of the Field Ambulance, says: "The training of the Medical units at this stage was most arduous, as the majority of the R.A.M.C. consisted of raw recruits; while drafts were frequently called for to replenish the first-line Division. However, field training, viz. first-aid and nursing duties, were all persisted in with the greatest enthusiasm, and the frequent field days with the Brigadier were always welcome." Early in January, battalions were organised on the four-company basis in the place of the old eight-company formation, necessitating the appointment of new seconds in command, company commanders, company sergeant-majors, and other officers. In February Japanese rifles were issued throughout the Division in place of the old type Lee-Enfields, provided for instructional purposes in London. The outstanding event of January was the inspection of the Division on Epsom Downs, on the 21st of the month, by Lord Kitchener, in company with the French Minister of War, Monsieur Millerand, then paying a visit to London for a conference at the War Office. It took place in a severe blizzard, with the ground deep in snow. The troops, who had paraded at 6 a.m., waited half-frozen in the snow-storm for some hours. The whole Division, less Artillery, was on parade, including the two battalions from Maidstone, which were brought over specially by train for the occasion.

For the inspection the London Scottish were posted on the right of the line, as being the only unit fully equipped with efficient rifles. The Japanese rifles had not then been served out to the Division, and the units possessed only the limited number of drill and practice weapons received in London; they were just sufficient in number to arm the front ranks. Lord Kitchener, who had been informed of this, confined his inspection, with Monsieur Millerand, to the London Scottish. They walked rapidly along the ranks of the battalion, after which, Lord Kitchener, it is reported, suggested to the French War Minister that the weather

was too bad to allow of a detailed inspection of the other units. Re-entering their car, they drove rapidly along the front line of the Division, after which the distinguished visitors returned to London.

A communication was received from the War Office on January 25th, expressing Lord Kitchener's "satisfaction and approval of the soldierly appearance of the 2nd London (Reserve) Division."

In January, and again in February, in consequence of the German spy mania prevalent in and around London, and stories of motor-cars being on the move at night, carrying lights to guide the Zeppelins, the battalions, particularly in the Dorking area, were called upon to provide outlying picquets and patrols to watch and block roads, holding up all cars, and carefully examining the credentials of passengers and drivers. Detachments were sent during February for special musketry courses at Sandwich.

"The Medical administration at this period," writes Colonel Dowsett, "had a very anxious time; for in addition to the training of the Field Ambulances and the unit Medical officers, there were a series of scares of the outbreak of infectious disease. Cerebro-spinal meningitis, measles, German measles, and diphtheria all occurred in the early days, in small numbers, though quite sufficient to cause alarm. But by prompt attention, and rigid segregation of all contacts—much to the annoyance of the units concerned as a rule—there was never an epidemic of any sort." Colonel Dowsett adds, "The supervision of billets throughout the Division was a continual worry and anxiety, principally on account of the scare throughout the whole country caused by cerebro-spinal meningitis, and compelled a continuous round of sanitary inspection and sizing of accommodation to prevent overcrowding."

Throughout the winter trained drafts to the first-line Division had been sent continually. The departure of that Division, now known as the 47th (London) Division,

for France early in March further taxed the personnel of the Division, which was called upon to supply additional officers and men to bring it up to establishment.

These later drafts, in many cases, heavily depleted units and reduced them seriously below strength. By the aid, however, of a vigorous recruiting campaign in March and April, conducted by specially appointed officers and parties of N.C.O.s and men, together with reinforcing drafts from the third-line units, now formed at the depots in London, the Division was again able to fill up to its establishment.

At the end of March the Division moved by rail into Hertfordshire, taking over the district about St. Albans and Watford vacated by the first-line Division, and again going into billets. The Field Artillery brigades, which had remained from the first, training in London, now joined and concentrated in the Hemel Hempstead area.

Through General Calley's energetic representations, after overcoming various official difficulties that were raised, he was able to have an Artillery training school for the Division established. The R.E. companies of the Division established their Head-quarters at Radlett, occupying that place, Shenley, and villages in the vicinity. With horses, waggons, and adequate *matériel*, now at their disposal, it was possible to make good progress. Training of all units was advanced a further stage, and extended during the months that the Division spent in the St. Albans-Watford area, though considerably hampered by the constant demands for drafts for the 47th Division at the front. Specialist schools for bombers, snipers, and bayonet fighting were among the new features of the instructional work now undertaken. Field days, concentration marches, and tactical exercises, now first possible as the weather improved, were continually carried out, though many difficulties were experienced owing to the enclosed nature of the country, which largely tied down the movements of troops to the roads.

The Train on arrival at St. Albans took over forty "one-ton" lorries, which had been obtained on hire by the 47th Division, which considerably eased the transport work of the Division. Considerable difficulty with regard to horses had, however, still to be faced. The 47th Division had left behind them some 1,300 horses afflicted with mange. Several fields had been hired into which all these mangy horses were turned. One officer was left in charge, but with no men to assist him or look after the horses; and the sight of these fields full of gaunt, half-hairless spectres was truly pitiable. The Division, which was ordered to take them over, fortunately possessed in Colonel Lane, the A.D.V.S., an officer of exceptional capability and untiring energy. He took the matter in hand at once, ably seconded by Captain Beckett, A.V.C., and with fifty men lent by the O.C. Train—in spite of the fact that, in a consignment of a hundred horses sent from a remount depot in Yorkshire, seventeen on arrival were found to be suffering from mange—the disease was successfully combated; and in three months the whole of the horses were fit to work, and mange became an unknown disease in the Division.

Colonel Lane and his assistant cannot be too highly praised, yet he received no recognition of his energy and ability; while, to add insult to injury, the Ordnance Department subsequently endeavoured to compel the Train to make good harness and clothing which, having been infected, had to be destroyed.

The Division, in the last fortnight in May, moved to the Essex and Hertfordshire border. The move this time was made entirely by road; with some eight hundred tons of stores and baggage to be conveyed by transport capable of shifting barely one hundred tons. Five three-ton lorries were borrowed, and with their help, and by running the one-ton lorries three journeys a day, the work was successfully accomplished. The 2/4th Brigade moved to Saffron Walden, thirty-five miles, the 2/5th Brigade to

Bishop's Stortford, twenty miles, and the 2/6th Brigade to Braintree, thirty-three miles. The artillery moved from Hemel Hempstead to Much Hadham.

For the successful carrying out of the move the greatest praise is due to Lieutenant Cohen, in charge of the one-ton lorries; he worked his lorries, generally overloaded, unceasingly for three days, covering close upon two hundred miles a day. The Army staff were much upset by the speed with which the lorries passed their Head-quarters at Dunmow: it apparently never occurred to them that speed was the one essential for the completion of the job to time.

Training continued on the same lines as in the St. Albans area, progress steadily advancing. Between June and October most of the units were under canvas in the neighbourhood of the Head-quarters of their brigades. Combined operations of all arms were carried out regularly, but the same difficulties as before were encountered in regard to tactical exercises on an extensive scale; movements off the roads were prohibited until after harvest to prevent damage to growing crops.

Field days in the form of two-day operations began after the middle of August when the fields were clear. They were carried out under service conditions, including attacks on taped trenches, barrage firing, etc., the troops bivouacking, or finding shelter in barns on the intervening night. Two divisional exercises, in the form of three-day manœuvres, took place near Braintree on October 4th, and a fortnight later.

A general transfer was ordered in August of men who had volunteered for home service only, or were considered unfit, from age or other causes, to the third-line battalions of their units: their places were filled by special recruiting, and drafts of men enrolled for general service from the third line. Instructional training companies were formed, from which men on qualifying as trained soldiers were passed to their different units.

Camps were broken up in November, and units returned to billets at Bishop's Stortford, Saffron Walden, and Ware ; where they remained until January 1916, when orders were received for the Division to move to Salisbury Plain.

Referring to the six months between June and December 1915, an officer writes : " While in the camps rumours were constantly rife that the Division would before long be going overseas, and hopes time and again mounted high ; nothing came of it. Disappointment after disappointment was our lot, and draft after draft was called for and despatched. In their place fresh drafts of recruits joined from our depots, and the prospect of going overseas became less and less as the year drew to its end."

" The period at Bishop's Stortford," says another officer, " was largely spent in providing drafts for the 47th Division in France, and by the end of the year that Division must have been almost entirely made up of 60th Division personnel."

As a testimony to the quality of the drafts sent out, the two following statements by an officer of the Queen's Westminsters may be cited. Referring to a draft of three officers and two hundred and forty-four other ranks sent out in February, he says : " The draft, as a whole, probably contained the finest men that reinforced the 1st Battalion during the whole war. They had been carefully selected, and it must have been a hard wrench for the commanding officer of the 2nd Battalion to part with such splendid material, and so delay the chance of his battalion getting overseas as a unit."

Referring to another draft which arrived in France on August 20th from the 2nd Battalion, the same officer speaks of the men as being of a type " equal to the best tradition of the Queen's Westminsters ; " and adds, " The splendid material being sent us as drafts was deeply appreciated by the 1st Battalion."

Major-General E. S. Bulfin, C.B., was appointed to the command of the Division in December 1915. He was

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an officer of high distinction and wide experience in war. Before the Great War he had served in the Burmese War, 1892-3, and throughout the South African War from 1899 to 1902, on the Staff and in command of a column. At the outset of the Great War he had commanded the 2nd Brigade of the 1st Army in August and September 1914, and rendered particularly notable service on the Aisne. Promoted Major-General for "distinguished service in the field," he had commanded the 1st Division of the 1st Army in the battles round Ypres, until incapacitated by a severe wound at Gheluvelt. During 1915 he had held command of the 28th Division. On December 22, 1915, General Bulfin arrived at Bishop's Stortford to relieve General Calley. The handing over took place in the following week, and General Bulfin at once made a close inspection of all the units of the Division.

His first impression was not a very hopeful one. "The 60th," to use the General's own words, "had been bled white in officers, N.C.O.s, and men to furnish reinforcements for the 47th Division. The strongest Infantry unit was about three hundred of all ranks, and up to my arrival had been trained to the use of the Japanese rifle only." On representing the state of the Division to the War Office, the General was given a promise that, provided the Division was brought up to a standard of completeness and efficiency, satisfactory to expert opinion, it would be sent to France. In the meantime it was not to be called upon to furnish further drafts.



Edward H. Snellin 1919.

CHAPTER III

FINAL SHAPING ON SALISBURY PLAIN

IN the third week in January the Division moved to Warminster training area on Salisbury Plain ; and took over the huts vacated by the 34th Division : one brigade occupied Longbridge-Deverill, with the other two and Divisional Head-quarters at Sutton-Veny, near Warminster. Its occupation of its final training ground coincided with the Division officially receiving an independent denomination and number of its own, as the 60th (London) Division. The Infantry brigades were officially numbered as the 179th, 180th, and 181st.

A scheme of progressive training was issued by Head-quarters, and put in hand at once. It continued and extended the former courses under immensely improved conditions ; facilities for the thorough training, such as the Division hitherto had been quite unable to obtain, being now available.

In some notes which he drew up, from which several quotations are made in the course of this record, General Bulfin says : " The point that struck me most about the Division was the extraordinary quickness, intelligence, and alertness of the rank and file. They seemed to be capable of understanding what one was going to say before one had completed half a sentence. To one used to handling Regular troops, this higher plane of intelligence struck me very forcibly. The rank and file were above my expectations. The officers worked out their problems, and arrived at the same results as Regular officers, but taking totally different and much longer methods. The training of the officers for war, I early recognised, required much more trouble, and much more care than it had been possible to bestow on them before."

“Regular officers, junior Majors, and senior Captains from line regiments were brought in to command Infantry units within the first two months. The parting with their former chiefs, many of whom had served for years with the Territorials, caused widespread regret, but the exigencies of the situation, and the new system of intensive training, required younger men with experience gained in the war.

“We were fortunate,” to continue General Bulfin’s words, “in everything except the weather. It rained incessantly, and the men had to wade above their ankles in a sea of mud. I don’t think a single soul was ever dry for the first two months after our arrival. The odd thing about it was that the health of the troops improved enormously compared with what it was at Bishop’s Stortford. Probably the open-air life, improvement in messing, and regular hours, had much to do with the result.”

The Medical Department about this time became extremely anxious and concerned as to the stamina and physique of a large number of the recruits, particularly those sent during January to make up the establishment.

“The Medical Staff,” to quote a statement by Colonel Dowsett, “were much exercised in sifting the wheat from the chaff throughout the Division, and classifying Medical Boards had to be continually held. It was found that large numbers of unfit men were being recruited in London and elsewhere, and drafted to the Division; these had to be dealt with either by discharge or classified for home service. Their numbers became so serious that at the inspection by Lord French at the end of January, about four hundred unfit men, all of whom had been recently recruited, were paraded separately and commented on.”

To make good deficiencies special recruiting arrangements were set on foot and energetically carried out during March and April: the results were satisfactory. Finally at the beginning of May a large draft was received of some three thousand men of the R.A.M.C., who had volunteered for Infantry. They came mostly from Yorkshire and the

Midlands, and proved of excellent quality. "These men," in General Bulfin's words, "were exceedingly intelligent, and, after we had been some months abroad, quite a number of them became N.C.O.s and instructors."

"We were fortunate also," continues the General, "in getting during April the 1/12th Battalion, Loyal North Lancashire Regiment, which came to us as our Pioneer Battalion, under a most capable officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Beckett. They were a hard-bitten, thirsty lot of Lancashire miners, but what they could do with a spade was a perfect revelation. The Division owed a great deal to this fine battalion for the splendid work they did on the Vimy Ridge, and I attribute our comparatively low casualty returns to the rapidity with which these pioneers, assisted by the various battalions, managed to lower the depth of the trenches eighteen inches in record time."

Throughout the training at Warminster, particularly in its later stages, the aim was to consistently approximate everything as closely as possible to conditions in presence of the enemy at the front. In April, for instance, "We dug," as General Bulfin notes, "a complete set of trenches, with dug-outs, connecting trenches, support trenches, etc., and each unit occupied these trenches for a couple of days and nights." "I think," adds the General, "we were the first unit to do this in England, and it certainly paid us when we got to France, the men shaking down in the trenches quite naturally." As part of the officer's training, also, several novelties were introduced, among them a time-testing practice. It was designed with a view to expediting the time taken between an order being given out at Divisional Head-quarters, and the order becoming known to units and their rank and file. It took from eight to ten hours at first, but before the Division left for France it was seldom over an hour before the order reached, and was understood by, the privates." Speaking in general terms of the Warminster days, General Bulfin says, "From early morning until past sundown the men were kept at

work, with as much variation as we could possibly devise, and the keenness and enthusiasm of all ranks was a revelation to me. Leave was very sparingly given."

Brigade training began in April, with constant field days and night operations ; the exercises being carried out on an ever-increasing scale. Then followed divisional manœuvres by day and night, the entire Division turning out completely equipped for service.

The War Office meanwhile was paying special attention to the progress of the Division with a view to its early employment at the front. Official inspections were frequent. Field-Marshal Lord French visited the Division twice ; General Sir Arthur Paget, Sir John Campbell, and the Commander-in-Chief of the Southern Command, Lieutenant-General Sir H. C. Sclater, as well as a host of other inspecting Generals came from time to time. Among those who also visited the Division, and who rendered most useful service in obtaining artificers and men of various trades to render the Division independent on arrival in France, was Lord Esher, Chairman of the London Territorial Force Association. "He also," writes General Bulfin, "paid us several visits when we were in the line in France, and took the greatest interest in the Division throughout the war."

Brigade bands were established while the Division was at Warminster, one for each brigade, each battalion supplying musicians. This innovation proved of the highest value throughout the career of the 60th Division, alike in France, Salonika, and Palestine.

"They had at the front," says General Bulfin, "a marvellous effect in cheering and heartening the men up, on coming out of the trenches, when often badly shaken, and inclined to be dispirited."

The bands were always in request at other times ; during periods in rest billets, at officers' messes, on Sundays, etc.

Divisional concert parties, the "Barnstormers" in particular, were also started at Warminster. "We laid

in a stock of properties before we left England," notes General Bulfin, "and the amount of talent available was most remarkable; the performers including many well-known people from the concert and theatrical world."

The "Bee" sign of the 60th Division, one of the most notable divisional signs of the war, was originated by the General.

"At the time he instituted the 'Bee,'" says Captain Wheeler Holohan, of the London Irish Regiment, in his book on *Divisional and other Signs* (p. 91), "it was felt that the esprit de corps of the 60th Division had got to be fostered. The indiscriminate drafting of reinforcements to various units—possibly unavoidable—had destroyed to some extent the esprit de corps which existed in formations which had a Territorial designation. When Napoleon Buonaparte ascended the French throne he substituted the golden bee for the fleur-de-lis, which was the sign of the old regime; B stood for Buonaparte. By a peculiar chance it also stood for Bulfin, and the men of the 60th very quickly knew the allusion the 'Bee' had for their Division."

At the end of April came a surprise: the 179th Brigade, on April 28th, was suddenly ordered to proceed on special service to the South of Ireland. The Sinn Fein rebellion, which broke out in Dublin at Easter, 1916, had spread to Cork and the south-west of Ireland. Not more than three hours' notice was given before the first battalion, the Queen's Westminsters, was to leave; they were got off, however, within half an hour of scheduled time, though their Head-quarters were some three miles from Warminster station.

The entrainment continued throughout the night, and it was daylight before the last train left, in the early morning of the 29th.

The Brigade embarked at Neyland near Pembroke, and after a night crossing, in consequence of the activity of German submarines in the Irish Sea, reached Queenstown on the morning of April 30th. There they found that the

rebellion had collapsed, and was at an end. The Sinn Feiners, under arms, had taken alarm on hearing that troops were on their way against them, and scattering into the country districts, had mostly gone into hiding.

The troops on landing were received by the inhabitants in quite a friendly manner; they marched to a camping ground on Lord Barrymore's estate at Fota Island, about five or six miles away, where they remained for nearly a week.

The Queen's Westminsters proceeded on May 5th to Limerick, to see to the surrender of a battalion of local Sinn Feiners, which took place quietly on their arrival.

The London Scottish at the same time proceeded to Tralee. Brigade Head-quarters, with the Kensingtons and the Civil Service Regiment, on May 6th, marched to Ballincollig, arriving after a day of drenching sleet and bitter winds. A troop of the South Irish Horse and a section of Field Artillery, with two 18-pounders, from the Ballincollig garrison joined them next day, when all moved forward to Macroom. Small parties were sent round in company with Irish Constabulary during the next three days to hunt for and round up local rebels, and search for concealed arms. On May 10th orders were received for the Brigade to return to Queenstown and embark for England, Warminster being finally reached on May 18th.

General Bulfin was, now in the middle of May, officially informed that the Division had been most favourably reported on by the various inspecting generals. This was shortly followed by orders for the Division to be prepared to move to France in the middle of June. From May 20th onwards, the final arrangements for taking the field were in progress. Identity discs, field dressings, and active service pay books were issued. Embarkation leave for four days was granted. The final medical inspections were held, and the Medical Staff was kept busy with inoculations and vaccinations. On May 24th a route march took place of the entire Division—Infantry, Artillery, Ammunition

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Columns, Train and Field Ambulances, all in field service order, and the transport completely equipped in every detail with mobilisation stores.

The King's inspection followed on May 31st, the Division being drawn up in line of brigades on a wide open space to the east of Warminster. The units at the termination of the inspection marched past in columns of batteries and companies, and at the close the King, as General Bulfin records, "expressed himself as highly gratified with the turn out and bearing of the troops."

His Majesty while passing down the line remarked on the excellence of the A.S.C. horses. Their appearance at another inspection, held a few days later by the Inspector of Remounts, called for further commendation; in his report he wrote, "Never in the Army or out of it have I ever seen such horses or in such condition." "As to that," says Colonel Dalbiac, commanding the Divisional Train, "many of them were remodelled from the hairless spectres that the Division found on arrival at St. Albans. All praise to Colonel Lane and Captain Beckett!"

The King's review was the final event of the home service period of the Division.

CHAPTER IV

ENTERING THE LINE ON THE WESTERN FRONT

ORDERS for the 60th Division to embark reached Head-quarters on June 14th. The move was to begin on the 21st.

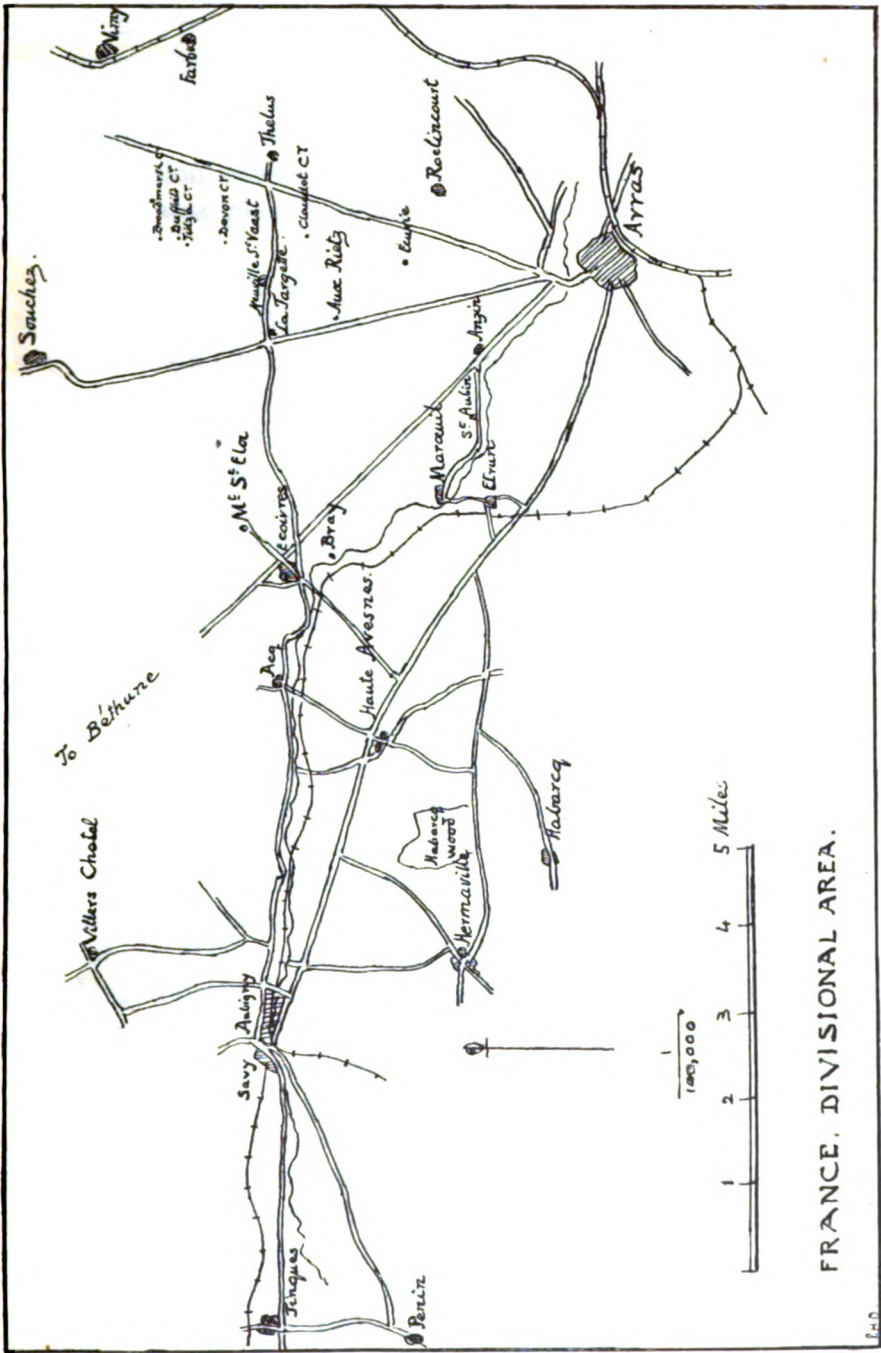
Divisional Head-quarters left Sutton-Veny on the evening of the 22nd for Southampton, and landed at Havre next morning. On the departure of General Bulfin, Brigadier-General C. McN. Parsons took temporary command at Sutton-Veny until all the units had left.

The 179th Infantry Brigade started on the 22nd and 23rd, two battalions moving each day, and reaching Havre the following morning. The 180th Brigade followed similarly on June 23rd and 24th, and the 181st Brigade on June 24th and 25th.

The Train, Artillery and Ammunition Column, and Field Ambulances crossed between the 22nd and 26th, and by June 27th the whole Division had landed in France. The passage from Southampton to Havre was, as usual, made at night, to minimise the risk of submarine attack. No incident occurred in the transit.

Head-quarters were established in the Château at Flers, about five miles south of St. Pol, on June 25th, well in rear of the Arras section to which the Division had been appointed. Staff officers were then sent forward to the 3rd Army and 17th Corps Head-quarters, and to the Head-quarters of the 51st (Highland) Division, which the 60th were to relieve at the front, facing the Vimy Ridge.

The brigades moved forward in succession by rail from the rest camp at Havre to St. Pol, whence they proceeded by route march to the district north of Arras, round Bray, Acq, and St. Eloi, in rear of the front line where the 51st Division was in position.



FRANCE, DIVISIONAL AREA.

ENTERING LINE ON WESTERN FRONT 43

The taking over of the lines from the 51st Division was to take place at an early date, as they were under orders to move elsewhere, in connection with operations then commencing on the Somme. The opening Artillery bombardment of the Somme battle was in progress when the 60th Division entered their future area, and the sound of the guns was plainly heard as the troops marched from St. Pol.

By June 29th the entire Division had closed up in rear of the line, Divisional Head-quarters opening on that day at Villars Chatel. Head-quarters of the 179th Brigade were at Ecoivres, those of the 180th at St. Eloi, and those of the 181st at Etrun. The Train was at Tinqués, and supply dumps were formed on the St. Pol-Arras road.

The Division began their attachment to the 51st Division for purposes of "tutoring," as usual, when divisions relieved one another in the line, on June 30th. It was carried out by individual officers and N.C.O.s; then by sections, platoons, and companies, and finally by battalions. The procedure was expedited as much as possible, owing to the impending early departure of the 51st Division, which was required to take place within a fortnight. Thanks to the strenuous intensive training under General Bulfin, on Salisbury Plain, and the keenness of all ranks, the Division was ready and fit to take over within the curtailed period.

Intensive training had begun immediately after detrain-ing, about Penin, and continued at high pressure; the finishing touches being also put to specialist courses, and advantage taken of sending officers and men to instructional schools; among others to the "Crater Consolidation School" at Aubigny, and the 3rd Army "Sniping School."

Orders were received on July 6th for the Division to carry out the relief of the 51st Division by 6 a.m. on July 14th, except the Artillery reliefs, which were to take place on the nights of July 14th, 15th, and 16th. The trench-mortar batteries relieved those of the 51st Division on the nights of the 11th, 12th, and 13th. The Infantry

brigades relieving those of the 51st on the night of July 13th. The reliefs were considerably hampered by the intensive bombardment to which the enemy, apparently suspecting what was taking place, subjected the front-line trenches every night.

The 181st Infantry Brigade, with the right Artillery group, the 3/3rd Field Company R.E., and one company of the Pioneer battalion, held the right sector of the line.

The 179th Brigade, the centre Artillery group, the 2/4th Company R.E., and one company of the Pioneer regiment, held the centre sector. The 180th Brigade, with the left Artillery group, the 1/6th Company R.E., and a Pioneer company held the left sector.

The Divisional area included the district between Suchez and Arras, extending westwards to the town of Aubigny where rail-head was established, and south to Hermaville, in the ancient château of which Divisional Head-quarters were established.

The line of front extended from the ruined village of Roclincourt on the right to beyond Neuville St. Vaast, similarly in ruins, on the left; running, roughly, about a thousand yards east of these places. In rear were the partially ruined villages of Ecurie, Anzin, Marœuil, Bray, Ecoivres, and Mont St. Eloi.

The Head-quarters of the Train were established in the village of Hautes Avesnes, with the supply dump on the St. Pol-Arras road, a few hundred yards below the village. It was a section of the front in which the enemy had every advantage of ground, and complete command of view. The divisional front was overlooked, practically from end to end, by the Vimy Ridge, extending for four miles, the highest point of which, just north of Thelus, reached an elevation of some 450 feet. From the ridge the enemy could see over the whole area, in clear weather, as far as the Habarcq-Hermaville-Arras road. "The observation of our lines in this area," writes an officer,

"was probably unparalleled elsewhere in the British zone on the Western Front."

The German trench lines, running as they did in a network of fire trenches and support trenches, with innumerable communication trenches between, along the outlying spurs of the Vimy Ridge, completely overlooked and dominated the British front and support lines, which ran entirely on low-lying ground.

Four successive lines constituted the divisional defence system. The forward line, termed the "observation line," consisted of independent posts, each strongly fortified, and sited on mine craters and sap-heads. The whole front was studded with mine craters, having been for many months past the scene of incessant mine warfare, and the original front-line trench had, before the 60th Division came, been replaced with a chain of fortified outposts pushed out into No-man's-land, or constructed on the line of mine craters which were linked by saps, with trench lines further back. In rear of the observation line, and as near to it as possible, ran the "firing line" or "line of resistance"; the main trench line of defence, which was to be held to the last. In rear again of this "firing line," and at an average distance of from eighty to one hundred yards, ran the "support line," fortified with strong posts. Finally in rear of all was the "reserve line."

The communication trenches ran from Anzin, Marœuil, and St. Eloi to the fire trenches, for a distance of over two miles. They had been originally constructed by a French territorial division, which held the line on the Arras front up till the previous March, before the 51st Division took over. All followed a very winding route, having been so designed originally for purposes of concealment, in consequence of the enemy's facilities for observation. For reliefs and heavily laden parties of men in long files continually passing along, the journey up to the line was always a very wearisome performance, especially in wet weather. "Territorial Trench," in particular, which

wound its way up to the line from Marœuil, without a single cross-track or means of exit till it reached the huge underground shelter of Aux Reitz, was notorious.

The Field Ambulances, on the Division taking over the front line, were distributed in rear of the three sectors for evacuating the sick and wounded, as follows: The 2/4th Field Ambulance was responsible for the left and centre sectors, and 2/6th for the right sector; while the 2/5th had charge of the Divisional rest centre at Hautes Avesnes. The 2/4th Field Ambulance had collecting posts with relays of bearers at Neuville St. Vaast, for the left sector, and at the forward end of "Territorial Trench" for the centre sector. Their advanced dressing station was at Aux Reitz, and main dressing station at Ecoivres. The 2/6th Field Ambulance had collecting posts at Ariane and Madagascar, points on the Bethune-Arras road behind Ecurie, also on the Lille-Arras road behind Roclincourt; their advanced and main dressing stations were at Anzins St. Aubin and Hautes Avesnes, with also a medical post and inspection rooms at Marœuil for the sick of detachments in that vicinity not otherwise provided for. The collecting post and advanced dressing stations were underground, except that at St. Aubin, which was in a well-protected dug-out in a bank, and the advanced dressing station at Aux Reitz, "a marvellous construction, dug out by a previous field ambulance, which was much improved by the 2/4th Field Ambulance. Evacuation from the latter was only possible by motor ambulance by night." Both the 2/4th and 2/6th Field Ambulances kept four bearers at each regimental aid post.

The Divisional Rest Station, manned by the 2/5th Field Ambulance, was used for receiving sick or slightly wounded cases, likely to be fit for duty within ten days, from the other two field ambulances. During the three months over three thousand cases were dealt with by the Divisional Rest Station.

Two brigades nominally occupied the front-line trenches for fourteen days at a time, seven days in the firing line,

seven days in the support line. One brigade remained in reserve meanwhile, "resting" for seven days.

The Division, on taking over from then onwards, by General Bulfin's orders, adopted a special form of discipline in the trenches, which differed from that in common use on that portion of the line. "In fact," says an officer, "the discipline was more like that on board ship than the military usage. There was always an officer of the watch in each unit, who was regularly relieved every four hours. Sentries were posted double, and, to prevent unnecessary casualties, the smallest number of men possible were kept in the front-line trenches; arrangements were made for them to be brought up quickly from the support trenches when required in an emergency. Our front-line trenches were constantly being heavily bombarded, and as few men as possible were therefore kept in these trenches."

CHAPTER V

FACING VIMY RIDGE : CRATER FIGHTING. TRENCH FIGHTING

MINING and counter-mining, and in particular crater fighting, went on incessantly from the first days of the Division taking over the Arras section of the front. It was a district in which, for a long time, the enemy had enjoyed local superiority in that particular, and had shown persistent aggressiveness.

The whole front line taken over by the Division was found to be honeycombed beneath the surface by mine galleries, old and new ; while, above-ground, the stretch of No-man's-land was everywhere scarred and pitted, and studded with huge upstanding mounds of disintegrated chalk and loam of various sizes and elevations, the result of repeated mine explosions. These thrust themselves up singly in places ; elsewhere, and more generally, in adjoining groups and clusters, extending from one end to the other of the front. "Some," describes an officer, "rose in pyramid shape, like huge cones to a height of 150 feet." Between sixteen and twenty extended along the front of the 179th Brigade sector. The largest of them all, known as "Broadmarsh" crater, some distance out on the enemy's side of No-man's-land, opposite Neuville St. Vaast, gave the German forward line complete observation over the whole of the left of the divisional front.

After the enemy positions in the Arras area had been captured in 1917, says an officer, "An examination was made of the German crater posts : it was astonishing to see to what an extent the enemy could look down into the British trenches. Even the communication trenches, in parts, were within observation, and in some places the very duck-boards at the bottom of the trenches could be seen."

The mines were blown by the enemy with two objects as a rule : either to destroy our trenches and their garrisons, or in order that the resulting rims or lips of the crater, formed by the explosions, might serve as observation or sniping posts for enfilading the nearest British trenches. The craters in No-man's-land were mostly the result of mines blown by the enemy with the latter intention. As soon as a mine went up a fight invariably followed between parties from both sides to seize and consolidate either or both of the lips of the crater formed. The close-quarter fighting with bombs and bayonets as the parties met was usually fierce and desperate, and often prolonged by repeated efforts to prevent consolidation and the establishment of a post in the crater. Units in the front line at all times kept parties in readiness, with dumps at hand of materials for consolidation : steel loophole plates, portable obstacles, and supplies of bombs, to make an attempt in the crater immediately a mine went up in the vicinity.

Mining activity opened vigorously during the last week in July. The enemy began, on the night of the 26th, by blowing a mine under an old crater, known as "Duffield" crater, opposite the 180th Brigade sector, followed by a heavy box barrage. The near lip was seized and held by us. For ready identification, most of the craters, it should be said, had more or less fancy names given them, which were so marked on the map. The explosion at "Duffield" crater gave us an advantage, as it raised the near lip, taken by us, making it the higher of the two by several feet. Two mines were blown by us on the same night, also in front of the 180th Brigade, by the 172nd Tunnelling Company R.E. The near lip of both were seized and held by us.

An immense crater, to which the name of "Tidza" was given, was then formed by the mine blown on the night of July 26th, the huge crater of which measured eighty yards across from north to south, and a hundred and twenty yards across from East to West. There was

severe fighting to seize the near lip of Tidza ; the Germans sallying out and meeting our consolidating parties belonging to the 2/20th (Blackheath and Woolwich Battalion), with bombs, rifle grenade fire, and a burst of trench-mortar fire. It took two separate efforts of desperate fighting before the near lip of Tidza was secured. Two officers of the Battalion, Lieutenant T. Gardner and Second Lieutenant G. T. Hellicar, were killed, and one officer, Second Lieutenant K. G. Malcolm, was wounded.

The Germans, on July 29th, blew a mine near " Devon " crater, opposite the left sector held by the 2/19th (St. Pancras). Two parties from the Battalion seized and consolidated the near lip, in spite of intense enemy efforts to drive them back.

Nightly, patrols, ten or more being often out at one time, were ever on the prowl in No-man's-land.

Patrolling, of course, was only possible after dark. " It meant," as an officer puts it, " crawling on one's stomach in the long grass watching the enemy's working parties, and hearing the tramp of their reliefs, while Very lights, our own and the German's, flared all round, and machine-gun bullets whistled overhead. All the time one was on the alert with bomb and bayonet to deal with enemy patrols. Thus the geography of No-man's-land was learnt and the enemy kept behind their wire. A patrol of the 2/15th (Civil Service Rifles), on July 30th, captured two Germans of the 184th Regiment, with important papers on them, also killing a third German. As in the case of the 2/22nd, a patrol from which had made a similar capture on the night of July 17th, the captors were congratulated by the Divisional Commander.

The Divisional Artillery, throughout the last weeks of July and the first part of August, were mainly occupied in keeping under the enemy's trench-mortar fire, the persistent aggressiveness of which, at times, rendered the holding of the advanced line and forward posts almost impossible. The Germans were exceptionally well

equipped with a superabundance of large trench mortars, and their activity called for continuous retaliatory attention from the batteries attached to the brigades. From August 15th to the 22nd, the Divisional Artillery kept up a series of concentrated bombardments on specified sectors of the enemy's line ; the firing being, by order, " in short bursts." The result was satisfactory. " Our Artillery," says a war diary entry for August 22nd, " kept the enemy in front quiet." August 29th, too, was a very effective day, a very destructive bombardment of the enemy's front and support trenches was carried out in co-operation with the Corps Artillery.

On the last day of July the enemy attempted a raid from behind " Duffield " crater, supported by trench-mortar and rifle-grenade fire. It was dealt with and beaten back by Artillery fire in response to an SOS message.

The systematic raiding of the German trenches, by Infantry units, began in August, and continued from then onwards. The chief object, on all occasions, was to obtain information for the Intelligence section as to dispositions and identities of the enemy forces in front ; in particular as to whether troops, known to have been on that section of the front previously, had been moved away to reinforce the enemy divisions on the Somme. The taking of prisoners was always a primary aim in the raids, for interrogation later at Head-quarters, together with the bringing away of " booty " in the shape of official papers, letters, or regimental badges ; anything, in fact, that might facilitate identifications.

The war diaries record details of most of these raids, and from that source the following accounts are taken.

The first raid, on August 6th, was carried out by the Kensingtons, supported by Artillery fire from the centre and left Artillery groups. The raiding party, under Lieutenant Read, found the trench, their objective, evacuated ; but in returning managed to seize and bring

away a prisoner from an adjoining trench. Compelled to separate under the heavy barrage that the enemy put down on No-man's-land immediately, the party began to retire; some of them lost their way and, by mistake, jumped into a trench in which were several Germans. These bolted at once, all but one man, who was caught and secured by Corporal Willis, the leader of the group, and successfully carried back to the British lines. Lieutenant Read, severely wounded, had to lie out in a shell-hole in No-man's-land all night: several efforts to find him, in the dark, by search parties from the Battalion, being unavailing. He was not got in until daylight. Lieutenant Read received the M.C., and Corporal Willis promotion to Sergeant and the Military Medal.

The second raid was carried out by the 2/23rd, the old "Loyals" of the 181st Brigade, on the night of August 7th. It was made by two parties; one comprising Second Lieutenant I. D. Hunt with two N.C.O.s and eighteen men, the second under Second Lieutenant Flint, with a similar number of other ranks. Both parties started from the sap-head, covered by a heavy box barrage from the right Artillery group and trench mortars. They were met within a minute of zero by a fierce enemy fire, showing that the enemy had been forewarned. The raiders also found a number of Germans lying in wait for them in the trench to be raided. Lieutenant Hunt, within a few seconds, had six of his party put out of action, and was consequently delayed. Lieutenant Flint, in charge of the other party, was more fortunate, and got through the enemy's wire without casualties. Lieutenant Hunt's party, severely shaken by the losses at the start, became practically knocked out, and had barely reached the wire when the barrage "cease fire" signal was made. They could do little more, and the survivors had to withdraw, and were back by 10.30 p.m.

Some time after the second party returned, reporting that Lieutenant Flint and two men were missing. It was

impossible to discover their whereabouts or what had happened to them, till between midnight and one the next morning, when one of the two missing men returned. He reported that Lieutenant Flint had been wounded, and lay in an old trench with Lance-Corporal Bradley, the missing man, looking after him. The man went out with a search party, but could not find his way, having lost all idea of direction in the dark. Finally, at 7.30, an officer's party, on hearing a call for help, went out and brought back both Lieutenant Flint and Corporal Bradley. What had happened to the second party, it is told, was this. On getting through the wire it had split up into three groups, Lieutenant Flint going with the centre party of eight. Directly they entered the trench a German was seen outside a dug-out, and a bomb was thrown at him : he fell back into the dug-out as the bomb was thrown. Three more bombs were thrown into the dug-out, apparently with effect ; then, while three of the men formed a bombing block, Lieutenant Flint, though wounded in the arm at the outset, and Lance-Corporal Bradley, rushed along towards the far end of the trench. They met several Germans, who showed fight, but bolted after two had been killed. Pressing on they flung bombs down three dug-outs in succession, from which yells and cries were heard as the bombs burst. The two again pushed on and met more Germans ; these flung bombs at them, wounding Lieutenant Flint in the arms, thigh, and leg, and he and Bradley had to retire, but unpursued. They met a private of Lieutenant Flint's party, and he, with Bradley, got the Lieutenant out of the trench with difficulty, which like all German trenches in the sector was several feet deep with vertical planked sides. The two were helping the officer back across No-man's-land when he fainted ; unable to move him further, they placed him in an abandoned trench, where Bradley stayed in charge of him, while the other man went for help, eventually reaching the Battalion. The two other groups of

Lieutenant Flint's party had worked for some distance down a German trench, but met no enemy ; withdrawing safely when the recall signal went up. Of the raiders one man was killed, twelve, including the Lieutenant, were wounded, and one man was missing. Lieutenant Flint received the M.C., and Lance-Corporal Bradley the D.C.M.

The 2/17th (Poplar and Stepney) of the 180th Brigade made a raid on the night of August 12th-13th. They bombed four dug-outs on a trench front of 130 yards, and killed a number of the enemy, but in the end were unable to obtain prisoners.

The London Scottish made a raid on the night of August 24th-25th on the enemy's post at " Broadmarsh " crater, as before with a view of obtaining prisoners for the identification of German units. It was carried out by Lieutenant T. C. D. Maclagen, as a " stealth raid " without the covering of artillery barrage fire. The enemy garrison, however, which it was designed to cut off, had evacuated the post ; so after getting through to the adjacent German trench and finding nothing of value to carry away, the raiding party returned.

A raid with a similar purpose, on another enemy counter-post, was made by a party of two officers and twenty-nine other ranks of the 2/24ths (Queen's) on the night of August 28th-29th. Although the crater was known to be ordinarily strongly held, and parties of the enemy had been seen moving round its rear edge at nightfall, all had disappeared when the raiding party, who crawled up quietly and approached in four groups, reached the post. An adjoining sap was bombed, but no returning fire came, so the party withdrew on the recall signal being made. The most successful raid was made in the vicinity of " Watling " crater, at 2 a.m. on August 30th, by three parties, consisting of three officers and sixty-two other ranks of the 2/19th (St. Pancras). It was carried through in twenty minutes. Twenty-five of the enemy were killed, and eight prisoners of the German 189th Regiment were

brought in, with "booty" that proved to be of considerable value to the Intelligence Section, while the raiders escaped with only two men wounded. The 3rd Army Commander, General Sir James Fergusson, and the G.O.C. of the Division, General Bulfin, both sent hearty congratulations to the Battalion, and to the Artillery who had supported them. Lieutenants Ashdown and Radcliffe, the two senior officers of the raiding parties, were awarded the M.C.

There was considerable mining activity on both sides during August, with a good deal of crater fighting. One notable crater encounter took place on August 11th, when at 12.30 a.m. a mine was sprung by the enemy in front of the sector held by the 179th Brigade. The explosion resulted in the formation of an exceptionally large crater, the "Pulpit" crater, as it was afterwards called. Immediately the mine went up, a party of the 2/13th (Kensingtons) made a dash for the near lip, and, after a sharp twenty minutes' fight, made good a lodgment. The leader of the party, Lieutenant Killingback, R.E., fell in the first encounter, but his place was taken by Lieutenant Thompson of the Kensingtons, and with the aid of a second party sent up to reinforce, a post on the near lip was consolidated by 4 a.m., in spite of persistent attacks by the enemy to force the party back with trench-mortar fire, aerial torpedoes, and rifle fire from the far lip, which the enemy had secured. Thirty-six men of the Kensingtons, with a party of the 4th London Field Company R.E., carried out the operation.

There was another notable crater fight at 7 p.m. on August 16th, when a mine was sprung under "Grange" crater, in front of the 180th Brigade sector. The crater, the near lip of which had been raised ten feet higher than before by the explosion, was raced for by a party of the 2/20th (Blackheath and Woolwich). Covered by fire from Stoke mortars and rifle fire, the consolidation party had, in ten minutes, made good their hold on the near lip, and

fixed loophole plates. They were firmly established in possession by the next morning, in spite of an all-night trench-mortar bombardment, and attempts of the enemy to isolate them by breaking through between the "Grange" and the adjacent "Tidza" crater. During the 18th General Bulfin and Brigadier-General Studd, the Brigade-Commander, paid a special visit to inspect the acquisition.

The shelling of the Train lines at Acq, on the night of August 3rd, was the most noteworthy effort of the enemy Artillery during the month. In, and around, the village at that time were two batteries R.H.A., two companies A.S.C., one Indian casualty clearing station, and an observation balloon nest; while close at hand were an engineer dump and R.F.A. horse lines.

The bombardment opened suddenly soon after 10 p.m., and lasted till 11.30 p.m. Upwards of thirty-two heavy shells fell, but fortunately some 10 per cent. fell blind. The firing apparently came from a 13-cm. gun mounted on the railway near Farbus. Little serious damage was done, some of the horses of the first Indian Cavalry D.A.C. stampeded through the horse lines of one of the A.S.C. companies (No. 3), and caused some half-dozen of their horses to break away. All these, however, were recovered: all the A.S.C. horses that night, and the others by early next day. The Head-quarters of the companies commanded by Captains Jay and Davis had narrow escapes. As regards the men, as an officer remarks: "The bombardment opened suddenly in the darkness, and it was the men's first experience of being under fire, yet all rapidly assembled and led their horses off the lines as calmly and steadily as if they had been going to watering."

A few shells were thrown around Hautes Avesnes on the following afternoon, but no damage was done.

The King, accompanied by the Prince of Wales and the Commander-in-Chief, Sir Douglas Haig, paid a visit to the Arras front on the afternoon of August 9th, during which His Majesty, from the observation post at St. Eloi,

watched the shelling of the enemy post in "Chassery" crater by the left group Artillery of the Division. The King afterwards sent a Staff officer to convey his congratulations on the excellent practice made. His Majesty, on his departure, was enthusiastically cheered by the men of various units, who lined the roadside as the King passed.

The enemy were allowed no respite from trench raiding during September. Two successful raids took place in the early morning of September 11th, one at 2.45 a.m. by the Civil Service Rifles, the other at 3.30 a.m. by the 2/20 (Blackheath and Woolwich). The objects of the raids in either case were, as on other occasions, to obtain information required at Head-quarters as to the dispositions of the enemy in front, and as to the arrivals and departures of enemy units from or to the Somme. The Civil Service party, under Lieutenant B. Peatfield and Second Lieutenant G. E. Thompson, was composed of forty N.C.O.s and men. As described in Lieutenant Peatfield's report, they started under a barrage of trench mortars and machine-gun fire, and were crawling across No-man's-land till close to the enemy's wire, when a sniper suddenly fired at them. Bombs were at once flung, under cover of which the German wire belt, some twelve or fifteen yards in breadth, was quickly crossed by means of a blanket mat bridge. Making their way into the trench, the bombing group of the raiding party made a block at one end, to prevent any interference; they were followed by the "marauders," who rushing along the trench threw their first bomb down the nearest dug-out, calling on the enemy inside to come out and surrender, or more bombs would follow. Four Germans of the 184th Regiment came up promptly, and were made prisoners. No further captures were possible, and the raiders then retired. They were back in the Battalion lines, with their prisoners, in little more than ten minutes from the start. A paper-chase trail, laid by Lieutenant Peatfield, as he went out, enabled

the return to be made rapidly and easily. Both Lieutenants Peatfield and Thompson were decorated for the raid.

An equally successful raid was carried out at 3.30 a.m. the same morning by a party of the 2/20th. Lieutenant J. Crafter was in command, with Second Lieutenants B. Wolfe and W. G. Thompson and sixty-eight other ranks.

So skilfully and smartly was the work done that, within twenty minutes, the party had raided the enemy trench, captured four Germans of the 122nd Regiment, killed a number of others, and were back in their own trench, with, in addition to the prisoners, booty which provided important identifications. Three men were killed in the fighting, and three others who were wounded were safely brought in.

A special message of thanks and congratulation was sent to the Battalion next day by General Haking, commanding the 1st Army, to which, as it happened on the very night of the raid, the 60th Division, on the extension to that quarter of the 1st Army area, had been transferred. The last part of General Haking's message ran as follows : "The Army Commander desires his congratulations to be conveyed to all concerned for their good and useful work in carrying out the raid last night. The identifications obtained are of great importance, not only to the 1st Army, but to all the allied armies on the Western Front."

The Queen's Westminsters on the 23rd executed a very successful raid from "Pulpit" crater sap; Lieutenant Stanley Hipwell and Second Lieutenant W. Mortimer were in command of the raiding party, which started at 10.55 p.m. and was back by 11.30 p.m. with five prisoners of the German 104th Regiment. They had a sharp fight in doing so. They moved off at the outset, covered by rifle fire, and found the enemy trench, their objective, full of men. The enemy, however, were apparently taken by surprise, and after a short encounter, in which they had several casualties, the Germans hastily retired, leaving five prisoners in our hands. The raiders, having accomplished

their purpose, withdrew with their captures, being safely guided back by their own tape. Lieutenant Hipwell was awarded the M.C. In the words of the official notification : " He led a successful raid into the enemy trenches with great determination. He covered the retirement of his men with great courage, by engaging the enemy with his revolver, standing on the parapet until the last man had crossed the hostile wire."

The gallant officer was unhappily the first of his battalion to be killed, falling within a few days of winning his decoration.

Another raid was attempted that night by a party of fifty of the 2/21st, led by Second Lieutenants Southin and Townend ; the enemy, however, were found on the alert in great force, and it proved impossible to get through the wire in spite of repeated desperate attempts. In the end heavy bombing by the enemy forced the raiders back, with several casualties.

The last raid of the month was carried out on the night of September 29th-30th by a party of the London Scottish under Lieutenant T. D. Maclagen, with Second Lieutenants C. Tennant and W. J. Bethune. The raiders were discovered by the enemy soon after their start and fired on, but by pressing forward they made good their entry, and after a sharp encounter brought away five German prisoners belonging to the 107th Reserve Regiment. Congratulations and thanks from the Corps Commander for useful identifications obtained, and from the G.O.C. of the Division, were received by the Battalion next day.

General Bulfin made this remark in reference to raids carried out by the Division : " I have no hesitation in saying that we always knew the German units in front of us, and if any unit was withdrawn to be sent down to the Somme we knew of it fairly soon, and communicated the move to Corps Head-quarters. Some of this information was highly valuable, and the Division received many complimentary messages."

In spite of orders during September from General Headquarters requiring extreme economy in the expenditure of ammunition owing to general shell shortage and the excessive requirements on the Somme, the Divisional Artillery in the course of the month attained a sufficient mastery over the enemy batteries opposite. The trench-mortar batteries, well supplied with ammunition, were able to give the Germans back as good as they gave, in spite of the enemy's strength in those weapons.

A typical extract from the 180th Brigade daily intelligence summary report of September 7th reads: "There was considerable trench-mortar activity during the day. We obtained excellent results in 'Watling.' One German was blown into the air, and like portions of others. What appeared like a stretcher party was seen later."

Heavy rain-storms were experienced in August, from the 28th to the 30th of the month, and again in September, between the 18th and 25th, continuously for three days. The rains did extensive damage to the forward lines in several places, flooding the trenches and causing the parapets to collapse.

The enemy, for their part, were not enterprising as regards raids. During the greater part of the time that the 60th Division was facing them, beyond the crater conflicts, the Germans seldom showed any desire to come to close quarters, or cross No-man's-land for a trench raid. The only serious attempt at a raid in force was on the night of September 23rd, and that was stopped before it started. A considerable number of the enemy were on that night discovered stealthily lining up on No-man's-land, in front of one of the sectors held by the 181st Brigade, preparatory to their barrage being put down. They had, however, but short shrift granted them; machine-gun and rapid fire was quickly opened on them. Surprised and taken aback by the storm of projectiles poured upon them, without waiting for their own barrage to open, the enemy broke up and dispersed. So rapidly did they disappear

that there was no need to call upon our own Artillery to assist. By way of retaliation the enemy shelled the 181st Brigade sector violently for a short time afterwards, but no further signs of any attempt to renew the attack followed.

A week later, on the night of September 30th, an attempt to break through, following on the blowing of two large mines near the "Claudet" crater, was made, close to a sap made by the London Scottish. The enemy's effort was balked by the stubborn resistance offered by the defenders, and the opportune arrival on the scene of the Civil Service Rifles, with whose assistance the Germans were driven back. The posts on both the new craters were consolidated, under heavy machine-gun and trench-mortar fire, and linked up with saps to the observation line, effectively barring the enemy off in that quarter.

Several raids on enemy trenches were made by units along the sectors held by the 180th and 181st Brigades during the first fortnight in October. The 2/20th led off with two raids on October 2nd and 4th. In the first, starting at 2 a.m., a party of two officers and forty other ranks took part. They were, however, unable to capture prisoners, the trench raided being abandoned by the enemy as soon as it was entered. The last of the escaping Germans, two men, after firing at the raiders got away before they could be closed with. In the second raid, made on October 4th at 7.30 p.m. by a small party of the same Battalion on a post near "Durand" crater, four of the enemy were killed, but no prisoners were taken. The 2/22nd carried out a successful raid between 6 and 7 p.m. on October 8th, the raiding party comprising four officers and fifty-two other ranks. Following up closely on the barrage, they found the wire "so beautifully cut that there was no need to use the blankets." Then, entering the trench, which they found empty, they raced along it to right and left, bombing several dug-outs, the occupants of which, on being summoned, had refused to come up.

After twenty minutes in the trench, the raiders returned with a prisoner of the 107th German Regiment, and several useful identifications, for which they were specially commended by the Divisional Commander. The 2/17th (Poplar and Stepney) made a successful raid at 1.30 a.m. on October 9th, bringing away six prisoners of the German 104th Regiment. In the course of the raid they bombed two dug-outs and a mine-shaft, and killed "at least seven Germans." The raiding party of three officers and fifty other ranks returned without a single casualty. The London Irish, who also made a raid on October 9th, starting at 8 p.m., were less fortunate in the matter of casualties; they came up against the enemy in force, and, apparently, expecting them; the moon, also, suddenly came out from behind clouds as they were crossing No-man's-land. In spite of everything, they got through the wire and into the trench. Attacking with bombs and bayonets, they killed several of the enemy at close quarters, and drove back the rest; some who took refuge in dug-outs refused to come up, and were bombed. In the end, however, it was found impossible to bring away prisoners. The raiders finally withdrew with the loss of one officer, Second Lieutenant Hicks, killed, three officers wounded, and thirty-one other ranks killed or wounded, and five men missing.

The last raid that the Division made while on the Western Front was carried out on the night of October 14th by the 2/23rd; the raiding party comprising three officers and forty-three other ranks. After a successful break-in, and after bombing several dug-outs, the raiders returned with several identifications, though without being able to bring any prisoners.

On the enemy's side, on October 11th, two attacks were made on posts near "Pulpit" crater; both were beaten off with considerable loss to the assailants, who left prisoners of the 122nd German Regiment in our hands.

CHAPTER VI

UNDER ORDERS FOR THE BALKAN FRONT

ORDERS for the 60th Division to be relieved by the 3rd Canadian Division were received on October 19th. The Division was to go into General Head-quarters reserve area, preparatory to proceeding to the Somme area. The relief of the Brigade took place between October 23rd and 26th. Divisional Head-quarters closed at Hermaville, and moved to Houvin; the move continuing next day, the 28th to Frohen-le-Grand, and next day to Berneville, in the 4th Army area. The Divisional Artillery remained in the line until relieved a fortnight later.

General Bulfin, on the day before quitting Hermaville, received a letter from the Corps Commander, Sir Charles Fergusson, in the following terms: "I should be very sorry to let the 60th Division leave the 17th Corps without expressing to them, through you, my thanks for all the hard work they have done, and my appreciation of the soldierly spirit they have shown throughout. It is a great pride and pleasure to have had such a division under one's command, and a real regret to part with them.

"I am very grateful indeed to you and your Staff for all the loyal co-operation shown to myself and the Corps.

"I am absolutely confident that the Division will make a name for itself whenever the chance comes, and I wish you and them the best of luck and success."

The destination of the Division, however, was not to be the Somme. Rumours to the effect had been prevalent during the last week of October, that, instead, a move to another theatre of war was impending. No definite information, however, was forthcoming until November 1st, on which day Divisional Head-quarters were officially notified. Sir Douglas Haig, the Commander-in-Chief,

personally informed General Bulfin, at an inspection of the Infantry units of his command, near Berneville on November 1st, "That the 60th as being one of the strongest Divisions on the Western Front had been selected to proceed to Salonika." Sir Douglas Haig, at the same time, expressed himself to the General as, "Very sorry that he was compelled to part with the Division, particularly as it had been so highly reported on by the Army Commander under whom it had served."

Information that Salonika was to be their destination was made known to the Division generally on November 4th, on concentrating round Ailly-les-Hautes-Cloches, near Abbeville. The Division, less the Artillery still retained in the line, had passed out of the 1st Army area on the previous day, changing the former direction of its march from southward to westward, for the area in which it was to be quartered during reorganisation for the new field of operations.

The organisation and re-equipment, to be carried out in accordance with special instructions in the Abbeville area, commenced forthwith throughout the Division, and continued at high pressure until November 14th, when the first units were to leave for Marseilles, the port of embarkation for Salonika.

Everything was now reorganised in accordance with the "Salonika War Establishments" scale, and adapted to local conditions in Macedonia. All mechanical transport, and G.S. waggons of the Train and Ammunition Column, as well as all heavy draught horses, were handed over, to be replaced by light G.S. waggons for mule draught. A certain number of mules were drawn from the 1st and 2nd Indian Corps Reserve Park, which was temporarily moved to the Abbeville area, for the carrying out of the transfer. The bulk of the mules required were to be supplied on arrival at Salonika.

Battalion establishments were fixed at 35 officers and 880 other ranks, and were brought up to strength by

drafts from England, which arrived between November 10th and 15th, together with the reinforcing drafts for the Artillery, Train, etc.

The Train establishment was increased by 20 officers and 2,200 other ranks, and the three Transport establishments of the R.A.M.C. absorbed as A.S.C. companies. Only indispensable saddle horses were to be retained.

The Divisional Artillery, on arrival in the reorganisation area, on November 2nd, after relief by the Artillery of the 56th Division, was re-formed into four-gun 18-pounder, and four 5-inch howitzer batteries. To the great regret of all ranks of the Division, the three Infantry Brigade Commanders, Generals Baird, Studd, and Parsons, were not able to accompany the Division to Macedonia; their services being required elsewhere. The two former were succeeded on November 9th by Brigadier-Generals F. M. Edwards and F. M. Carleton. General Parsons had been relieved by Brigadier-General Da Costa on October 13th.

The entrainment of the Division at Longpre began on November 14th, and continued till the 25th of the month. It proved a slow and protracted process, owing primarily to the lack of loading-up facilities, and intensified by the late arrival of the troop trains day after day. In some cases the trains were from seven to twelve hours late, the troops having to wait at the station in the interim in a sea of mud and exposed to very inclement weather. The 180th Brigade, for example, according to an officer: "Arrived at the station on Saturday evening in pouring rain; the train did not come in until about noon on Sunday. It rained in torrents all the time, and everyone was soaked through."

The following are extracts, in this connection, from a divisional Artillery Staff War Diary:—

"November 14th, entrainment of 60th Division from Longpre to Marseilles begins. First train departed at 7.55 p.m., second train due out at 9.27 p.m. was nearly five hours late. Causes of delay were: First, train

was not at platform to time; second, lack of loading facilities.

"November 15th, entrainment continues. D.A.C. entrainment greatly delayed through having only one ramp and side-loading trucks. Train due out at 12.27 a.m. did not come alongside till 3 a.m., and did not leave until 8.28 a.m.

"November 16th, entrainment continues. Delay caused to-day by non-arrival of train. Asked to enquire, but no result. Train due in at 10.27 a.m. did not come alongside till 11.30. Was loaded with D.A.C. and Artillery by 4.30. Artillery need their trench bridges to entrain their horses."

Similar entries, invariably noting excessive delays, continue until November 25th, when at last the entraining was completed. Divisional Head-quarters left Longpre on November 24th, and arrived at Marseilles on the 28th, embarking on the following day. The units of the Division had been arriving at Marseilles on various dates, from November 18th onwards. They proceeded on detraining to the various rest camps in the district, in readiness for embarkation as transports became available. The first to sail were units of the 179th Brigade, who left on November 19th. All were at sea and on their way to Salonika by December 12th, by which time several of the earlier-starting transports had reached their destination.

CHAPTER VII

FIRST DAYS AT SALONIKA

THE Division assembled at Salonika during the first half of December, as the transports, which had left Marseilles independently, arrived. They were escorted by destroyers, as enemy submarines were very active in the Mediterranean: but all made the passage safely, calling en route at Malta.

Divisional Head-quarters landed at Salonika on December 8th. Describing the approach, an officer says: "We came up through the various minefields protecting Salonika, taking a zigzag course. On either side of us were several biggish steamers, which had been run ashore after being torpedoed by German U boats. Salonika looked most attractive from the sea, with its various minarets and villas scattered about among the trees; but, on a closer inspection, after landing, we found it anything but attractive, with its filthy lanes, abominable roads, and squalid buildings."

At Salonika the Division joined the British Expeditionary Force under command of Lieutenant-General Sir George Milne, which formed part of the "Allied Army of the Orient," as the French termed the force serving in Greece and Macedonia.

The Allied Army was composed of French, British, Italians, Serbs, and Russian contingents, all under the command of the French General Sarrail as Commander-in-Chief.

The arrival of the Division brought the strength of General Milne's force up to six divisions—the 10th, 27th, and 28th forming the 16th Corps; and the 22nd, 26th, and 60th, the 12th Corps, under the command of Lieutenant-General Sir H. Wilson.

The front occupied by the Allies extended from the Struma River, on the east, to Monastir and the Albanian

frontier on the left. The British held the right sector of the line, from the mouth of the Struma, up the river to Lake Tahinos, and then in a westerly direction by Lakes Butkovo and Doiran to the River Vardar. The 12th Corps was responsible for the line from Butkovo to the Vardar; the front ran along the mountains known as the Krusha Balkan, as far as about two miles east of Doiran, when it turned southwards, and lay on the lower grounds bordering on Lake Ardzan. The Bulgarian Second Army which faced the 12th Corps from Butkovo to Doiran was formidably entrenched along the Belashitza Range, in a series of almost inaccessible positions, from 1,500 to 2,000 feet higher than the Krusha Balkans; while from Doiran to the Vardar their position completely dominated the British lines, especially at the point about Doiran, known as the "Grand Couronné," rising to a height of nearly 2,000 feet.

The French and other allied contingents extended the general line west of the Vardar, across the Cerna bend to Monastir and into Albania. At the time that the 60th Division arrived, active hostilities were at a standstill; conditions of stalemate, or deadlock, so to speak, existed all along the whole front, holding the main forces on both sides, practically immobile in their positions—a situation that had existed since the taking of Monastir in November. Ever since then the setting in of exceptionally severe and inclement weather, continuous heavy rains and storms of snow, had rendered operations, except of a very minor scale, impossible.

The 179th and 180th Brigades were the first to land, and on disembarking marched to Uchanta and Dudular camping grounds, on a barren, open plain, sloping gradually from the hills to the sea, north of the Monastir road, some seven miles west of Salonika. They had their first experience of what a winter campaign on that front meant, within a few hours of reaching their camping area, on the night of December 8th–9th. A storm of hurricane violence broke on that night and swept over the camp,

with drenching torrents of sleet and rain that converted the whole plain into a quagmire of deep mud ; while the furious gusts of deadly cold and penetrating wind, " The Vardar Blast " as it is locally called, brought down the tents on all sides. The storm abated on the following day and the succeeding spell of fine weather enabled the work of fitting out the Division for service in a country devoid of towns and villages where supplies of any sort could be obtained, and of roads fit for wheeled traffic, to be completed. Bivouac shelter tents, to be carried by all ranks, one to every two men, and pack saddlery were issued, and drivers instructed in the fitting and loading of the latter.

Mules were issued at the same time ; a certain proportion of them were raw, half-broken animals just landed from the Argentine and Southern States of the U.S.A., and in a good many cases the difficulties in breaking them in to the work they were to perform were endless. A good many used to break away from their lines, and stampede at night ; and these had to be searched for and collected, not an easy job, and redistributed next day. A good many never were collected, except, probably, by Greek villagers. There were a good many other mulish tricks that some of them performed ; rolling when loaded up, throwing their packs and bolting, for example : but the drivers, many of whom had shed tears when they had to give up their horses in France, took to their mules in a wonderful way ; and a little energy and patience were quickly effectual in getting them under control.

An officer of one of the Field Ambulances writes : " Medical equipment on trained mules, at its best, has its disadvantages, but training raw mules to carry it was no sinecure. The writer, on more than one occasion, saw at Uchanta, a medical or surgical pannier flying high off the back of a refractory mule, with all the contents in mid-air. Training the mules to carry the cacolet, litters, and travois for the transport of sick and wounded was an anxious, troublesome task."

CHAPTER VIII

" THE KATERINI TREK "

THE first move forward fell to the lot of the 179th Brigade. Within ten days of the landing of the Division, the strained relations then existing between the Greek Government and the Allies made it necessary to take precautionary measures for the security of the base at Salonika, so as to bar any hostile move by the main Greek Army assembled in Thessaly. The Infantry of the 179th Brigade, with a machine-gun company, two batteries of Artillery, a field company R.E., and the 2/4th Field Ambulance embarked from Salonika harbour on the night of November 10th and proceeded by sea.

On the afternoon of the next day they arrived at Vromeri, a small fishing village some miles from Katerini. The disembarkation on an open beach was much hampered by a heavy ground swell, the precursor of a rapidly approaching gale. Some of the troops were compelled to wade, waist deep, some seventy or eighty yards to the shore. All the men were landed by evening, but, owing to the fast rising gale, but little of the stores or baggage could be put ashore from the lighters, as before the storm broke they had to stand off and make for Salonika for shelter.

The passage back was very rough, and a large part of the stores and baggage were washed overboard and lost. This enforced hasty departure of the lighters, left the troops at Vromeri without provisions, as it had been impossible to land the rations before the lighters were forced to leave. It was two days before the gale died down sufficiently to allow the lighters to return and unload, and a number of the men in the interim had to have recourse to their iron ration for subsistence. No time meanwhile had been lost in pushing forward with the

work in hand, while two battalions, the London Scottish and the Queen's Westminsters, were ordered to bivouac at Vromeri and await the return of the transports. The Kensingtons and the Civil Service Rifles were sent forward to Katerini, where they occupied the town, and took up an outpost line at Estepe and Kolokuri, in the foothills to the west and astride the road from Katerini to the Petra Pass, in the neighbourhood of which the Greek troops were understood to be. There was no attempt at opposition anywhere, and at Katerini the inhabitants, though inclined to be sullen at first, on finding that the British meant no ill will and were prepared to pay for everything, soon showed themselves friendly.

A small garrison of French territorials was found in the town, who on the arrival of our troops at once placed what stores they had at our disposal and did all they could to be helpful. The London Scottish and Queen's Westminsters marched up from the coast on December 12th, the former bivouacking west of Katerini and in tents, using the local “ Palais de Justice ” as a hospital, from which the more serious cases were evacuated by boat to Salonika. General Bulfin went over to inspect the position at Katerini on December 13th. In describing the demeanour of the people of the place and the friendly attitude already displayed towards the British, he tells the following amusing story :

“ The most popular regiment in the Brigade was, undoubtedly, the London Scottish. While I was criticising the tactical arrangements with Brigadier-General Edwards at his Head-quarters, I found a deputation had come, headed by the Mayor and Elders of the town, while a crowd of two or three hundred men had formed up in the streets outside. The Mayor made me an address expressing the feelings of the inhabitants as being full of pride in having the honour of so many British Regiments quartered on them. Their conduct, he said, was exemplary ; they were immensely popular with everybody ; but, he went on,

the real reason of his coming to see me was, that some two hundred young men, not only from Katerini, but also from several neighbouring villages, had come in to ask if they might join the London Scottish. He further said that these young men would fight and conduct themselves in a manner worthy of the Greek nation, and that they recognised that their behaviour would require that they should uphold, not only the honour of their country, but also, the splendid traditions of the London Scottish. I thanked the Mayor, and praised the spirit of these young men, but regretted that I was unable to enlist them. I suggested, however, that they should form a Town Guard of their own, and endeavour to form a battalion to defend their country, if their services were required. They were all much disappointed, but they decided to form a Town Guard, although they possessed no arms. I understood later, that they learnt English words of command, and were drilling in accordance with English ideas, which they picked up from watching our men."

The Train with the 302nd Brigade R.F.A., the Brigade transport, and a troop of the Lothian Border Horse left Uchanta on the evening of December 10th and reached Katerini on the 15th, after a trying and difficult cross-country march. The march, for the greater part of the way, was made in incessant rain, which flooded the streams in the Vardar marshes, making the fords difficult and sometimes dangerous.

"We got away fairly well on time," writes an officer with the supply column, "but nobody realised what was in store for us. It was a six days' trek to Katerini, which was to be our Head-quarters. For the first thirty-six hours of the journey it rained incessantly, rivers were flooded, and in one case it was marvellous that no lives were lost at the swollen ford. Speaking of fords, a company of about twenty-five Ford runabout vans made the same journey frequently across country, sticking at nothing. Our own particular work on this journey was to pick up

the road party at their evening halt and issue their supplies to them for the next day. The farther we went from Salonika, the more difficult this became, as the Athens line was broken in almost forty places by the floods ; we practically followed the Railway Repair Company R.E. on a pilot engine, and marched the last seven miles into Katerini along the railway track. We arrived there on Friday afternoon, December 18th. . . . Rations were running very low ; in fact, in many cases the iron ration had furnished the day's food, and the Staff-Captain was then purchasing sheep locally. Our arrival, with a train load of supplies following, was hailed with joy. Katerini was to be our home for the next three months, and very happy we were there.”

The construction of a strong defensive line, from the south and west, towards Larissa and the Petra Pass, was undertaken at once, and completed within a few weeks ; the outpost line beyond, extending along a low ridge between the villages of Estepe and Kandariolega, with bivouac camps on the reverse northern slopes of the ridge. From the outpost line a clear view across twenty miles of open plain was obtainable towards Larissa and the mountain range over which Olympus towered. The only approaches to Katerini from the Greek front were by the Petra Pass or the sea-coast road. The former was kept under observation and blocked by a strong defensive work in advance, which was garrisoned by a battalion ; while entrenched lines barred approach by the latter. Within the defended area a system of roads, constructed by infantry working parties, ran from Katerini to points along the line. The railway line from Salonika to Katerini was restored within the first week or two, and put in working order by the R.E., enabling a regular service of trains to bring up stores and supplies. The 518th Wheel Transport Company, under Captain Collison of the Train, arrived at Katerini on January 10th, to relieve the auxiliary company A.S.C., which had been responsible for the transport up to date.

The Greek troops at Larissa, meanwhile, remained quiet and inactive, showing no disposition to interfere. The only incident implying possible hostile intentions that occurred was the appearance of an aeroplane over Katerini on December 17th. The aeroplane was marked with two blue crosses, which caused some hesitation in regard to the order to fire ; when the order was given the plane was well out of range. A second aeroplane visit by four machines was paid on January 17th, but on this occasion the planes kept at too great an elevation for their nationality to be determined. Nothing else to indicate any hostility on the part of the Greeks took place ; but a constant state of readiness for immediate action had to be maintained.

The Katerini expedition came to an end in March, when, on the 5th, orders were received for the 179th Brigade to rejoin the rest of the Division, which by then had moved to the Doiran front. The start was made in two columns, which moved on the 7th and 8th of the month respectively. The first column consisted of the detachment of the Lothian Border Horse, two batteries of Artillery, the ammunition column, and the Train. It reached its destination, Kalmova, without incident, beyond being shelled near Karasuli, happily without suffering any casualties.

The second column comprised the four infantry battalions of the Brigade, with the Field Company R.E., Field Ambulance, and a company of the Train. The final stages of this march proved an ordeal that put the endurance of the troops to the severest test.

The start took place in fine weather, the column being given a hearty send-off by the inhabitants of Katerini, while the French detachment in garrison, paraded a guard of honour to render a parting salute. Three days of fine weather followed, a hot sun by day and a cold wind off the sea by night ; until the 13th, on which day the Brigade crossed the Vardar near Topsin. On that night the weather broke. It cleared temporarily next morning when the last daylight march was made to Amatovo, where the

troops halted at noon, with orders to move on again after dark.

They had now come within observation of the enemy's look-out station on the "Dub," as the peak of the towering Hill "535" was called.

"Hill 535," writes an officer, "completely dominated the whole country to the south and south-east. Wherever we went either in or behind the line, one saw the ugly shell-scarred crest of '535' looking down on one. Most of the enemy long-range shooting was directed from here, and excellent long-range shooting they made."

The continuation of the march beyond Amatovo was a struggle forward in the dark, as best might be managed against a succession of fierce storms of sleet and a piercing wind. The route lay along a table-land from a hundred to a hundred and fifty feet in height, and from a mile to a mile and a half in width between Lake Amatovo and the River Vardar. The track was ill-defined and strewn in places with loose boulders, and in the pitch-black night it was almost impossible to see. As the troops advanced, often only possible in single file, the track soon became a morass of mud and flooded in places almost knee-deep in water. The pace became slower as halts had to be made to maintain direction or close up the columns. For six hours the column trudged its weary way, units doing their best to keep together until, after midnight, the outskirts of Karasuli were reached; where a short halt was made to reform the straggling column and restore the order of march.

The halt was not for long, as the camping ground for the Brigade was some distance beyond Karasuli, and there was yet another hour's march before it would be reached, and the storm was still raging. At last, between 1 and 2 a.m., the march from Amatovo ended; according to staff plans, it should have been completed five hours earlier, by 9 p.m. The drenching rain abated by degrees as daybreak came on, and the ground became less sodden

under a drying wind, which enabled the troops to form bivouacs and pitch their shelter tents. The mules were unloaded, and after a meal the men settled down for a day's rest, before continuing the final stage of the march to Kalinova, close up in rear of the front line where the 179th Brigade was finally to rejoin the Division. But it was not to be—the unexpected happened. Shortly after midday, just as the men's dinners were preparing, orders suddenly came for the Brigade to get under arms at once and make an immediate move again that afternoon, so as to reach Kalinova that night.

After recrossing the ravines and broken ground over which the last part of the previous night's march had been made, the column pushed forward for a time satisfactorily. Then, however, the wind shifted to the north, the sun went in, and heavy dark clouds began to bank up ahead. The second storm began as the afternoon closed and darkness came on. Heralded by a blinding storm of hail, which quickly changed to snow, a fierce Vardar blizzard, of nearly hurricane force burst on the column, just as the road it had been following was quitted for a cross-country track leading more directly to Kalinova. It led across a range of steep hills, thickly overgrown with scrub and bush ; and the difficulties and hardships in getting through in the darkness, in face of the blinding snow, made the march even more trying than that of the previous night.

The following extract from number 27 K.B. section diary—descriptive of the same storm is of interest. "At 5 p.m. the gale was varied by a blinding snowstorm, which was hurled upon us after a preliminary bombardment of hail. The snow continued during the entire night. . . . Near our transport, however, a man of the London Scottish fell dead from exposure, and another died as he was being taken to the Field Hospital close by. More than a dozen mules and horses lay dead between the camp and Gugunci." To halt was impossible. All had to breast the blinding snow, and what was worse the piercing hurricane of wind,

and keep on, quite done up as most of the men were by now. The blizzard, too, played considerable havoc among the baggage and transport animals. “ No one,” according to an account of that night’s march, “ had any fear of being lost ; the route was well marked with abandoned limbers, dead mules, and fallen loads.”

The end came at midnight when Kalinova was, at last, reached, and the final march of the hundred-mile “ Katerini trek ” terminated.

CHAPTER IX

HARASSING THE BULGAR EAST OF DOIRAN

WHILE the 179th Brigade were at Katerini, the other two brigades of the Division had quitted Salonika and moved up to the Doiran front, where they were employed independently.

The 180th Brigade were ordered on December 17th to proceed to the area round Lake Ardzan, for employment on XII Corps defence line, between the Vardar, eastward to Lake Ardzan, and on to the River Spanc.

The 181st Brigade, the last of the three to arrive at Salonika, remained there until the end of December, when it was ordered to move up to the front line and take over the section immediately east of Lake Doiran. The 180th Brigade left Salonika in two columns on December 28th, and the following day, marching via Naresh and Sarigol to Gerbazel, where Head-quarters were temporarily established. The march was a toilsome and trying one owing to the bad state of the track, one of the former highways of the country, but now in a hopeless condition of disrepair. Beyond Naresh hardly a track existed, what remained of it the winter rains had converted into a morass of deep mud. At Gerbazel the units separated, and were distributed over a wide area for the work in hand, companies of one battalion, in some cases, working miles apart. In February, for instance, the 2/17th were near Snevce; the 2/18th at Gugunci; the 2/19th at Vardino, between Lake Amatovo and the Vardar; the 2/20th at Arantci, Vergetor, Janes, and Kukus. The Brigade was employed in constructing entrenchments, repairing trenches, on drainage works, and road-making, at the same time being kept available as a reserve to the troops holding the front line, in the always expected event of the enemy taking the offensive. The enemy, however, was quiet, attempting



no action beyond air attacks, which were incessant, beginning as the Brigade was on its march up from Salonika. "They never let us alone," writes an officer. "Always, at between four and five on Sunday mornings they came round, on that day usually visiting Corps Headquarters ; there, however, little harm was done as we were well provided with dug-outs. The rest of the week they devoted to the ordinary troops."

Speaking of one attack in particular, the officer in question says this : "One afternoon, just as our column was passing Brigade Headquarters, eight or nine enemy planes came down on us and dropped bombs all round, doing extensive damage. They cleared off, but within half an hour were back again, dropping bombs on Brigade Headquarters and battalions near. A third time they came back, and once more attacked the column, sending mules and horses galloping wildly all over the place, while limbers were upset and for a time there was great trouble. We had no fast planes to meet them with, and were at their mercy. After about four months of this sort of thing, the planes moved on to other parts, and we were thankful." Otherwise the 180th Brigade spent an uneventful time in that area.

The 181st Brigade, meanwhile, in advance to the north, on the easternmost section of the front, was engaged in harassing the enemy facing them. The Brigade had landed at Salonika between December 12th and 15th, and had similar experiences to the earlier arrivals ; a Vardar blizzard meeting them on arrival. The Brigade left Salonika between January 9th and 14th, moving in five columns. It was accompanied by Divisional Headquarters, which proceeded to Karamudli, at which place they established themselves till the Division concentrated on the western flank of the line.

The route taken was by Naresh, Amberkeui, Sarigol, Gramatna to Snevce, a village on the River Spanc, just below the hills of the Krusha Balkan range, where the

columns arrived between January 12th and 20th. Enemy aircraft made two attacks on the columns during the move, one at Sarigol and one on arrival at Snevce ; but on neither occasion was any damage done.

From Snevce the Infantry battalions pushed forward and crossed the main ridges of the Krusha Balkan Range, nearly 3,000 feet high ; making their way from the ridge down to the northern foothills along which our line ran. The distances traversed from Snevce were from ten to fifteen miles ; but getting across the mountains proved an excessively arduous task for the heavily laden men, carrying on their backs their winter kits of extra warm clothing, bringing up the weight carried by each man to something like ninety pounds. The only way over the range was along narrow, steep tracks winding up the hill-sides, through thick scrub-oak woods, slippery and deep in mud caused by the winter snows and rains.

The line taken up by the 181st Brigade formed the extreme left section of the British front between the Vardar and the Struma. It ran along the slopes of the northern foothills of the Krusha Balkans, from the south-eastern shore of Lake Doiran eastwards, for about twelve miles, to the neighbourhood of an old dismantled Greek fort called Dova Tepe. Along the front, at the base of the hills, stretched a flat, marshy plain, with here and there the remains of an abandoned village, and in places clumps of trees and small woods, while from east to west ran the River Hodza, a narrow, winding stream, liable to sudden freshets, which found its outlet in Lake Doiran.

The enemy's main position lay, to the north along the crest of the Beles or Belashitza mountain range, at an average distance from the British position of from ten to twelve miles. On the lower foothills fringing the north bank of the Hodza extended a line of strongly protected advanced posts and trenches with, in front of them, the line of the enemy outposts, which occupied some of the ruined villages which had been fortified. This outpost

line ran some three miles in front of the British wire, and was pushed out to serve as an observation line, in case of any attempt by the British at a concentration by night on the plain.

Head-quarters of the Brigade were at Baisili, at an altitude of some 3,000 feet on the main ridge of the Krusha Balkans. All four battalions were placed from the outset in the front line, which consisted, instead of continuous trenches, of a chain of fortified posts, strongly wired all along. Each battalion had charge of about three miles of front.

The fortified posts were garrisoned only at night, or during foggy weather. In the daytime, double sentries, at observation posts, kept watch at each ; there being a clear field of view from the foothills across the plain to the enemy's positions. The troops were under cover during the day, nestled along the reverse slopes of the foothills, out of sight of the enemy, and safe from Artillery fire.

The battalions of the Brigade were distributed as follows, from west to east. The open ground immediately south of Lake Doiran was watched by mounted troops, which was all that was needed on that side. From the south-eastern shore of the lake, the 2/24th held the line as far as the village of Popovo (inclusive) : the 2/23rd carried the line from near Popovo to a point south of the village of Rabovo : from there the 2/22nd were responsible for the next three miles towards the north-east, linking up with the 2/21st, who held the easternmost sector in the vicinity of Dova Tepe. Three companies of each battalion were in the front line, with the fourth company held in support a short distance in rear, near Battalion Head-quarters. As a general reserve, two battalions of the 180th Brigade, road-making in the mountains, were always within call. The harassing of the enemy's outpost line, with a view to compelling the Bulgars to evacuate their posts on the intervening plain, was the special work with

which the Brigade was occupied during February and March.

The last days of January were utilised for preparations and preliminary arrangements. Night operations formed the initial stage, the patrolling of the plain so as to obtain as intimate a knowledge as could be acquired of the ground between the British line and the enemy posts. By day careful observations were made of all guiding features and outstanding landmarks, which were noted and mapped to aid in directing the raiding parties. The detachments from each battalion selected for the work were, in the interim, also specially instructed and practised in the methods to be employed.

Each battalion was allotted a section of the enemy's outpost line as its raiding area, with carefully defined limits.

To destroy the enemy's fortified posts, cut off the garrisons and take prisoners was the primary object of the raids. Each raiding party was to start from its own battalion line well before dawn, and make its way, as noiselessly as possible, across the plain so as to reach its "jumping-off" point, as close as possible to the post to be attacked, as daylight came on. It was not anticipated that serious opposition would, as a rule, be encountered. This supposition proved to be correct; the enemy either cleared off at the first alarm or evacuated the posts after a few shots; falling back to their advanced line in the foothills, or leaving their Artillery to retaliate on the raiders.

The raids, after a preliminary reconnaissance in force, extending over a front of about five miles, in which detachments of about one hundred and fifty officers and other ranks from the 2/21st, 2/22nd, and 2/23rd were engaged, began with an attack on February 3rd on the enemy's posts in three villages, Akindzali, Cakli, and Erdzili in the central section of the enemy's line, carried out by the 2/22nd and 2/23rd. The Bulgars, however, fled on the first alarm, and got clear away, abandoning the posts.

Three days later, on February 6th, the 2/24th successfully raided the enemy posts in Palmis village, held by a garrison of about one hundred Bulgars. The attack was made by two parties from the battalion, one working round by the north to take the enemy in rear and cut them off, the other approaching from the south. The hoped-for haul of prisoners, however, was not obtained; the first party, unexpectedly coming upon a force of Bulgars on its way to relieve or reinforce the garrison. The noise of the encounter gave the alarm to the garrison, who hastily quitted the post, and made off before the second party of raiders could reach the village. In the encounter nine or ten of the enemy were killed, and a prisoner was taken. A respite of ten days was then given the enemy, although night patrolling round their posts, with occasional interchanges of firing, kept them occupied. On the night of February 17th the garrison of Brest village was attacked by the 2/24th, assisted by a subsidiary attack by parties of the 2/22nd and 2/23rd, directed against the Hodza Redoubt, as we called a strongly held work in the vicinity of Brest, and the posts in the neighbouring villages of Akindzali and Garbali. The 2/24th attacked with 10 officers and 150 other ranks in four parties; the 2/22nd with 11 officers and 180 other ranks, also in four parties; the 2/23rd with 9 officers and 120 other ranks, in three parties.

The 2/24th started from their lines at 6.15 p.m., and were masters of Brest by 8.30 p.m. The garrison, taken by surprise, bolted after making a feeble resistance; they left behind five dead, and three prisoners fell into our hands.

The village was held all night, while the defences of the place were being destroyed by a demolition party of R.E., accompanying the raiders, who accomplished all that could be done to render the post untenable.

Repeated attacks to recover Brest were made by enemy reinforcements from the advanced Bulgar lines during the night, assisted by Artillery fire from the nearest enemy batteries; but the raiders kept possession till daybreak,

when they retired, all getting into their own line by 8.30 a.m. on the 18th.

The flanking parties of the 2/22nd and 2/23rd, meanwhile, had assisted in the attack on Brest, by keeping up an incessant musketry fire on the nearest enemy posts; they were, however, unable to get to close quarters on that side as the garrisons of the posts there evacuated them as soon as the raiding parties began to close in.

Another raid by parties from the same regiments was made at daybreak on March 7th. The 2/24th once more attacked Brest, which the enemy had again placed in a state of defence, and occupied since the former raid. The 2/22nd raided Akindzali and the Hodza Redoubt.

The raid, like that of February 17th, was made in force and simultaneously: the 2/24th had 11 officers and 170 other ranks out in four parties; the 2/23rd 17 officers and 250 other ranks in seven parties; the 2/22nd 10 officers and 150 other ranks in four parties.

The 2/24th, this time attacked Brest from the north and south at once, and met with but little resistance. Two prisoners were taken, and the raiders brought away a number of official papers that gave very useful information.

The 2/23rd found the Hodza Redoubt abandoned on their arrival, and blew up the parapet and dug-outs.

The raiding party of the 2/22nd attacking further east, had a sharp encounter with a force of some sixty Bulgars. They broke their opponents up with a loss of some twenty men, and brought away eight prisoners. On our side the casualties were two other ranks killed and one officer and eight other ranks wounded.

On March 17th, the same three battalions, working again together, raided Brest, the Hodza Redoubt and Akindzali, for the third time. The 2/24th, operating in nine parties, were, on this occasion, able to surround Brest and attack it on all sides at once; finally rushing the outposts and taking as prisoners the Bulgar officer in command of the post and thirty-eight men.

The 2/23rd also met with success at the Hodza Redoubt, where the garrison were taken by surprise and captured, with the exception of one patrol, which had started out before the raiders arrived, and finally escaped by hiding in the reeds near by.

The casualties in the raiding parties were fortunately few. The work, however, that fell to the 2/6th Field Ambulance which was responsible for the whole of that sector of the front, in the evacuation of sick as well as wounded, was, it is stated on authority, "some of the most arduous work that any of the medical units was called upon to perform." The main dressing station was at Snevce, with advanced dressing stations up the line at Basili and Sarakli, with collecting parties forward near Ereselli and Mamudli. This was an enormous front for one field ambulance to cope with, and the evacuation of the sick and wounded was a colossal task. It took a whole day to evacuate a patient from the extreme right at Dova Tepe to the main dressing station at Snevce; half the trip being in a mule litter, or travois, and the other half by ambulance waggon. Matters were rendered still more arduous by the weather; ice, snow, or deep mud generally covering the mule tracks and waggon routes, with occasionally a blizzard of some violence to face. When, later, the general thaw set in, the ambulance waggons from Mamudli to Basili were often axle-deep in mud, and could only be got through by harnessing ten mules per waggon, for the entire journey. For the whole period, too, it was necessary to have a medical post at Gramatna, some ten miles south of Snevce, to deal with some labour battalions at that place, every man of which had to be examined by a medical board once a month.

The Train ration dump was established at Karamudli, where Train Head-quarters and two companies were quartered, a village about a mile and a half north of Snevce and immediately under the hills which rose almost sheer up to Basili, some fifteen hundred feet. Snevce was

connected with the rail-head at Sarigol, seventeen miles to the southward, by a Decauville railway, laid in the previous year by the Italians.

The Balkan winter, however, had proved too much for the Decauville, the rails were either sunk in the mud or buckled up, and it was of little service during the whole time that the 181st Brigade occupied this front.

"The erratic performances on the railway," writes an officer, "would have been amusing had it not had to carry out the important duties of bringing up ammunition and supplies, and carrying back sick and wounded. On an ordinary journey it left the rails two or three times, and proceeded across country. The unfortunate driver worked in a cloud of steam, which escaped from various broken pipes of the engine, and prevented his seeing where he was going. The consequence was that on a lucky day (perhaps once in a month) the train turned up several hours late; on other days it turned up several days late, or oftener still, not at all." All that could be done to patch it up was done; and about the time that the Brigade left the sector, it began to run fairly regularly.

The Train had, practically, to get up all its supplies by road from Sarigol, by mule transport. The company at Sarigol took the loaded waggons to Gramatna, and the company at Snevce empty waggons to the same place, the mules were then transferred, the empties taken to Sarigol and the loaded waggons brought on to Snevce. It was arduous and weary work owing to the condition of the road—"holes, between mud-heaps"—and often six mules were required for half a limbered waggon. The only decent portion of the track was, some five miles, along the bed of the River Spanc from Alexia to Snevce.

From Karamudli rations had to be taken forward to the front line in the mountains by pack mules; the distance to be traversed varying from five to seven miles: no light labour for the men engaged in getting the pack mules over

the mountains deep in snow and mud, and constantly in blizzards or fogs.

All the animals, in spite of the hard work they had to perform, were on half rations of tibben and grain, oats and hay being unprocurable. An order was issued, before leaving Salonika, that all mules were to be clipped ; the order was, fortunately, more honoured in the breach than the observance. All the clipped mules died in a very few weeks of the cold, and the rest suffered a good deal for a time until they were taken off the lines and put into wired corrals, where being loose, they could bunch themselves together and keep comparatively warm. The horses stood the weather all right, but of course they were rugged, which no doubt accounted for it.

The 181st Brigade remained in position on the Krusha Balkans until the last week in March. It was then withdrawn and moved to the Doiran-Vardar section, where the 179th and 180th Brigades were already in line, in readiness for the opening of the spring offensive, due shortly. The sector allotted to the 181st Brigade was on the extreme left of the line, adjoining the Vardar River.

CHAPTER X

IN THE LINE WEST OF DOIRAN

THE Division received orders, at the end of February, for a general concentration in view of taking over the section of the front line between the Vardar and Lake Doiran, held by the 22nd Division.

The spring offensive on the Doiran front was to open during the first week in April, according to instructions received from the Commander-in-Chief of the Allied forces, General Sarrail. The French and Serbians were to commence operations earlier, in the middle of March, attacking west of the Vardar, across the Cerna loop and north from Monastir, in conjunction with an attack still further west, by the Italians in Albania.

The 60th Division was ordered to take over the section of the line eastward from the Vardar, to a point about two-thirds of the distance between that river and Lake Doiran. The 22nd Division, on relief by the 60th, was to close in on the 26th Division, which was facing the enemy's strongholds on the Petit Couronné and adjacent range of precipitous heights to the west of Lake Doiran. The 22nd and 26th Divisions, in co-operation, were to carry out the main operation in the spring offensive on the Doiran front.

The move began with the concentration of the 180th Brigade, in the first week in March, in the neighbourhood of Mihalova, in the district north-east of Lake Ardzan, a short distance in rear of the line. It moved up and took over the sectors held by the 66th Brigade of the 22nd Division, on the night of March 8th-9th. The 179th Brigade, then arriving from Katerini, relieved the 67th Brigade in the front line on the night of March 18th. During these reliefs the enemy bombed Causicaa daily, from March 14th to the 18th, causing a considerable number of casualties on the last day.

The 181st Brigade continued in its first line position east of Lake Doiran, until relieved by the 83rd Brigade on March 26th. It then concentrated in the neighbourhood of Snevce, where it was heavily bombed on the 27th, suffering some casualties. It then proceeded to the Doiran-Vardar section, and took up the line on the left of the other two brigades, with its left resting on the Vardar River, on March 30th.

The G.O.C. 60th Division assumed command of the section of the front, taking over from the 22nd Division on March 19th, and Divisional Head-quarters were established at Karasuli. The limits of the divisional area ran eastwards from "Horseshoe" and "Kidney" hills, in the neighbourhood of the "Pip" ridge, in a general line southwards along the east side of Lake Ardzan, through Mihalova and Gavalanci to Avret-Hissar. It comprised four defence lines. The first was in the actual front line, divided into seven sectors, lettered from east to west, from F to M. The second line comprised a series of works between Lake Ardzan and the Vardar, north-east of the village of Oreovica. The third line was the Oreovica line, from a point on the Selimli Dere ravine, south of Oreovica. The fourth line was the Vardino line along the Vardino defile, between Lake Amatovo and the Vardar.

The weather throughout the move was deplorable; a succession of rain and sleet storms alternating with snow blizzards. One of the worst of the blizzards, lasting twenty-four hours, came down on the 180th Brigade on February 28th and the following day, while bivouacking during the concentration in the Mihalova district. The whole tract of low country, across which the moves had to be made, was under enemy observation in the daytime, so they had to be carried out at night, which, in the bad weather, and over rough and difficult country, made the concentration trying and laborious for all concerned.

The Train on its march from Snevce to Killindir had a most trying experience, after leaving Moravca after dark,

in descending the mountain. An officer gives the following description of the experience gone through. "The bulk of the Train, with over 1,000 animals, moved down the track from Moravca to Killindir. This track was totally unfitted for wheeled vehicles, even in the daylight, and descended the side of the mountains, falling some 1,500 feet. They had orders not to quit Moravca till after dark, as they were exposed to Artillery fire in the descent. The night was inky black, with a fierce Vardar blizzard blowing, backed by blinding snow, and the greatest credit is due to Major Okell, who was in command, and to all ranks for the fact that the march was accomplished without casualty to man or beast. The seven or eight miles of descent took some eight hours to accomplish, and on reaching the plain Major Okell found the river so swollen as to be impassable. He therefore, as it was just daylight, and he was in full view from the enemy's position, moved off to his left and took shelter behind some foothills, where the whole column had to remain for the day, exposed to the blizzard and biting snow and frost; with everybody practically soaked to the skin. His only reward," continues the narrative, "was a request to send his reasons in writing to Corps Head-quarters, for issuing rum without corps orders, and not reporting at Killindir at the appointed time; an impossibility owing to the swollen state of the river: while the issue of rum probably saved a life or two, and at any rate some sickness."

The concentration moves of the 60th Division, as it happened, coincided with the arrival in Macedonia, at the end of February, of a formidable German "Travelling Circus," so called, of some twenty Gotha aeroplanes and other large bombing machines. The Division speedily had experience of their destructive activities.

On February 26th, XII Corps Head-quarters at Janesh and the British aerodromes there and at Hadzi Junas were heavily bombed. The 180th Brigade was just then carrying out its concentration moves towards Mihalova.

One of its battalions, the 2/20th, was bivouacking close to Janesh for the day, but fortunately being able to remain well concealed in a ravine escaped without any casualties. On March 2nd Salonika was heavily bombed in the afternoon; considerable damage was done, and the number of casualties was heavy: hospitals were struck, and the magazine had a narrow escape.

On April 5th, the enemy made a very successful air-raid on Karasuli. It was the most destructive one from which we suffered in the loss of stores and material. "The planes, fourteen in number," according to a detailed description of what took place, "came over about midday on a glorious spring morning. The station at Karasuli, rail-head for ourselves and the French division on our left, was hit and burned out. The supply dump was wrecked, over one hundred tons of hay, and a great quantity of other stores being burned, and the contiguous ammunition dump was blown up. Four waggons in the station, loaded with high explosives, luckily escaped. The S.S.O., Major Murdoch, Captain Whittington, and Lieutenant Seligman, of the Train were in the station at the time, but luckily escaped unhurt.

"Fourteen waggons with their teams were near the station at the time, waiting to load up with engineer stores; the corporal in charge luckily kept his head, and, after the discharge of the first bomb, ordered the drivers to leave the waggons and lie down in the marsh, with the result that one man only was wounded. Every mule was killed, and all the waggons blown to fragments."

The conduct of Captain Young, the Adjutant R.E., cannot be allowed to pass without notice. Seeing that some of the mules were still alive, though horribly mangled, he took a rifle and ammunition, ran across the marsh, regardless of the shells falling thickly from the exploding ammunition dump, and put the poor creatures out of their misery. It was an extremely gallant and humane act.

Seven bombs fell in the Train Head-quarters lines, fortunately without doing any damage, beyond slight wounds to a few of the mules ; but two men of a Labour Corps, working in a nullah which ran through the line, were killed.

One bomb which fell on a marquee in the rest camp, killed and wounded more than thirty men.

In addition to these raids, daily bombing attacks were made on some portion of the line, particularly about Kalinova, and, more than once, observation balloons were brought down in flames.

The assailants, however, did not always get off scot-free. An officer thus describes what took place on one occasion when the observation balloon at Kalinova was attacked. "Two planes came over and fired on it, when suddenly a third plane appeared from a tremendous height and swooped down on it. This plane turned sharply on a level with the balloon, and apparently in so doing, broke one of its wings as it turned, and came crashing down just behind Brigade Head-quarters. It immediately burst into flames, and, when the fire was put out, the pilot was found dead, and everything on him burnt and charred except the tab on his shirt with his name on it, and his purse with four gold twenty-mark pieces in it. The pilot was the most famous in the region, and no more attempts were made on the balloon."

The enemy's Artillery showed considerable activity on the arrival of the Division in the line, beginning with a succession of bombardments on, in particular, the 179th and 180th Brigade sectors. The 179th, at the eastern end of the divisional front, were severely shelled on both March 16th and 18th. The bivouacs of the Queen's Westminsters, in F section, seemed to be the enemy's chief target on the 16th, and Brigade Head-quarters on the 18th, when considerable damage was done by 5·9 shells. The 180th Brigade were also heavily bombarded on the 18th. On March 17th there was a general bombardment

by the enemy along the whole line, but without serious effect. It was afterwards learned that the firing was meant as a sort of display for the entertainment of Prince Boris of Bulgaria, who paid a visit to the Bulgar front on the 17th. The line of the Doiran front extended for about thirteen miles from the southern end of Lake Doiran to the left bank of the Vardar. The 60th Division had to hold between nine and ten miles of the total distance, from the river eastwards. On the remaining shorter front the 22nd and 26th Divisions were concentrated.

The divisional line, at its eastern end, began a little way south of the "P" or "Pip" ridge, at a prominent knoll or spur called the "Horseshoe," and an adjacent small elevated plateau known as the "Whaleback." Thence the line continued westwards along a chain of heights of moderate elevation, with intervening dips of lower ground extending at first in a south-westerly direction to near the village of Bekirli: thence it trended nearly due west to the Vardar. Behind the forward line, to which it ran practically parallel for some distance and separated by a ravine, the Cidemli Dere, rose a range of higher elevation, the Kolonova heights. In front of the position stretched a wide plain, intersected with small nullahs, and dotted with small hills in places, through which, traversing in its course a deep ravine, ran a stream called the Selimli Dere, at this time of the year in flood and difficult to cross, except at one or two fords. The Selimli Dere ran parallel with the eastern portion of the line, then turned southwards and south-east, passing through the line between the sectors held by the 180th and 181st Brigades. Thence it continued its course, joined about three miles in rear of the line by the Cidemli Dere, and entered the western side of Lake Ardzan.

The plain was from a mile to a mile and a half wide, and served as No-man's-land between the British and the Bulgars.

The enemy had their first line, a continuous chain of fortified posts, wired all along, on the foothills fringing

the northern side of the plain, which were, for the most part, of greater elevation than the hills on the British side. The enemy's line ran westward from the "Pip" ridge, through the village of Devedzeli, to near the village of Pobreg, where it turned south to a strongly fortified spur, overlooking the British line facing it, known as the "Nose"; whence it stretched away for four miles along the hills to the Vardar.

The 179th Brigade held the right of the line, three sectors: F, H, and I; the 180th Brigade, the centre, two sectors: J and K; and the 181st Brigade the left of the line to the Vardar, two sectors: L and M.

The main trench line extended along the forward slopes of the hills, north of the Cedimli Dere. It was held by day by sentry groups only, which sufficed to keep the plain in front under observation. The rest of the trench garrisons remained under cover in the daytime, withdrawn to small bivouac camps and dug-outs along the reverse slopes. All moved up at night, when the trench line was strongly held, with a chain of sentries out in front along the wire. Picquets were pushed out at night, well forward into No-man's-land, in addition to strong patrols constantly on the move farther in front. Machine- and Lewis-gun parties guarded the dips between the hills. Work on strengthening and extending the defences went on continuously every night, the soil excavated being carefully removed and deposited out of sight; the Bulgars seemed invariably to suspect that any fresh earth thrown up and lying on the ground meant a gun position, with the result that a bombardment invariably followed.

The transport lines and ration dumps were stationed on the reverse side of the Kalinova heights, parallel to which ran the main Karasuli-Killindir road, which facilitated communications all along the rear of the position. All supplies were issued and taken forward only at night, as the enemy had every track and path-way over the heights exactly "taped"; any movement

by day, even runners in the smallest parties, at once drew fire.

The stations of the Field Ambulance were as follows : the 2/4th Field Ambulance had its main dressing station at Kalinova, where it arrived in a blinding snow-storm. Its advanced dressing stations were at Clichy ravine and Bekirli ford. The 2/5th Field Ambulance had its main dressing station at Spancovo, with advanced dressing stations at Causicaa, and near the village of Ardzan, by the Selimli Dere in its southern course towards the lake. Another advanced dressing station was placed further forward in the same ravine. The 2/4th Field Ambulance had relay posts for ambulance wagons between the advanced and main dressing stations, owing to the long distances and difficulties of the tracks. The 2/6th Field Ambulance had its main dressing station near Oreovica village, on the Karasuli-Smol road, and its advanced dressing station at the village of Smol in the church there.

In consequence of the enemy air-raids all over the area during March and April, the Field Ambulance stations were fully occupied in dealing with wounded, also with casualties from the front line in the operations at the "Nose" on April 24th and 25th ; and in May, during the push forward of the 179th Brigade after May 8th.

The attack on the Doiran front, originally fixed by General Sarraill for the first week in April, was deferred for various reasons until the last week of the month.

The enemy facing the Division were, in the interim, for the most of the time unaggressive. Except for two small raids that they made there is little recorded in the war diaries beyond intermittent shellings from the divisional Artillery.

The two Bulgar raids were made in the first week of April, both on sectors of the 179th Brigade. On April 1st after a heavy bombardment of Bowl's Barrow, Hill 275 and Piton 6, from 2.40 to 3.40 a.m., a party of Bulgars, estimated at from sixty to one hundred strong, under cover of a box

barrage, suddenly appeared in front of the trench line at Bowl's Barrow. Several of them reached the parapet, but they got no farther, and the whole raiding party was speedily repulsed. As they were retreating, a patrol of the Queen's Westminsters, led by Second Lieutenant Dawson, encountered them and, after a sharp fight at close quarters, routed and dispersed them.

Our casualties were three killed and nine wounded. The second raid, or rather attempted raid, for it failed to reach the trench line, was made at 2.40 a.m. on April 17th on " F " sector on the " Whaleback " held by the London Scottish, by a party of about sixty Bulgars. The raiders were in this case stopped and broken up before reaching our wire.

CHAPTER XI

HOLDING THE ENEMY IN APRIL-MAY, 1917

PREPARATIONS were proceeding, meanwhile, for the special operations allotted to the Division, which were to take place simultaneously with the main operation by the 22nd and 26th Divisions, near Lake Doiran. The date for both was fixed for the night of April 8th-9th, subsequently postponed until the last week in April. The 60th Division's part was to carry out two attacks on the strongly fortified enemy position of the "Nose," and the "Piton des Mitrailleuses," otherwise known as "Machine-gun Hill." The 180th Brigade, opposite whose sections both objectives were, was to undertake the attacks, parties from the 2/19th and 2/20th being told off as the assailants. The preliminary orders to the two battalions were issued on March 30th, and the officers and men selected were put through a course of special instruction and rehearsals forthwith. Those to be employed were sent out nightly to explore and reconnoitre the route to be traversed across No-man's-land—upwards of a thousand yards. At the same time a reproduction to represent as exactly as possible the trench sector to be attacked, was taped out and dug for rehearsing the attack behind the line. Secrecy was specially enjoined by the following order to commanding officers: "All ranks who know of the forthcoming raids, are to be warned not to send any messages referring to the raids, and all talking about them in back areas is to be avoided."

Only one of the attacks, however, took place. At the last moment a modification of the original plan had to be made. The projected attack on the "Piton des Mitrailleuses" had to be cancelled, owing to there not being sufficient Artillery support available for both attacks; in consequence of the greater part of the divisional Artillery

having to be used to reinforce the Artillery for the main operation in the vicinity of Lake Doiran.

The preliminary bombardment of the enemy's work on the "Nose" opened on April 20th, continuing daily until the evening of the 23rd; after which it reopened especially to cut gaps in the enemy's wire, and did not cease until a short time before the raiders set out.

The assaulting parties were to enter the enemy's trenches at three selected points. The centre party was under Captain D. Watson, the right party under Lieutenant Kemp, the left party under Lieutenant Hunt. Flanking parties were sent out to right and left, before the zero hour, to take posts in readiness to keep off attacks from either side. Sappers of the 519th Field Company R.E. with Bangalore torpedoes and a party from the 180th Machine-gun Company accompanied the raiders: the whole force engaged totalling three hundred and fifty of all ranks.

The assaulting parties were at their appointed "jumping-off stations," opposite gaps cut in the wire, by 10.30 p.m., after some difficulty in finding the gaps owing to the intense blackness of the night, and the extremely complicated dispositions of the enemy's entanglements. They were not kept waiting long at the gaps, the enemy discovered them immediately, and a blaze of coloured Very lights went up instantly, giving the signal for a devastating trench-mortar barrage to open. The next moment, three powerful search-lights were turned on from behind the "Nose," which showed up the raiders, and all No-man's-land, as clear as in daylight.

The British barrage opened promptly, and a dash was at once made for the gaps in the enemy wire: only one, however, of the assaulting parties was able to get through the enemy's barrage—the centre party, numbering some fifty of all ranks. The right and left parties came under the enemy's barrage at once, suffering severe casualties. The centre party under Captain Watson managed to pass

the wire in front of them, but only with difficulty. They had five wide belts of wire to cross, and it was found that the gaps, cut by our Artillery, had mostly been repaired. But they did not hesitate : by means of wire-cutters, mats, a ladder and a Bangalore torpedo pushed through and exploded, a way through was made, and the enemy's front trenches entered. These were found to be evacuated, but had been carefully barricaded in places with entanglements of barbed wire and various other obstacles. The raiders, whose numbers by that time had been reduced by casualties, were attacked immediately on entering by the former garrison of the front-line trenches, who had taken post on high ground in rear. They assaulted the raiders furiously with a storm of bombs, rifle grenades, rifle fire, trench mortars, and machine guns. The enemy were, however, stubbornly kept at bay, and the counter-attack, launched to retake the trenches, was beaten off. The enemy was then kept back for upwards of half an hour, while demolition parties were destroying dug-outs, and everything that it was possible to deal with in the line. The signal to withdraw was given, on the expiration of the forty minutes given for the raid, and the party withdrew by the way it had come. They finally regained the battalion line at 2.25 a.m. The casualties for the night were : killed, 17 other ranks ; mortally wounded, 3 other ranks ; wounded, 2 officers and 68 other ranks, with 3 other ranks prisoners.

A letter expressing the Brigadier's appreciation was sent next day to Colonel Warde-Aldam, commanding the 2/20th, the Brigadier adding that : " The special attention of the Higher Command would be drawn to the gallantry displayed by Captain Watson and his party." Captain Watson was subsequently awarded the M.C.

While the attack on the " Nose " was taking place, the 2/23rd, by way of assisting the 2/20th and diverting the enemy's attention, carried out demonstrations against the " Piton des Mitrailluses " and near the Vardar at Makukovo village.

The main attack by the 22nd and 26th Divisions between Lake Doiran and the "Pip" ridge is thus described in General Milne's official despatch. "The attack was launched, after a bombardment of the hostile positions extending over several days; which elicited the fact that the strength of the opposing heavy Artillery had been considerably increased. The assaulting Infantry succeeded in entering the hostile trenches along the whole front attacked, meeting everywhere with very severe opposition. On the right, owing to the very heavy Artillery and trench-mortar fire encountered, more especially in the Jumeaux Ravine, a deep difficult obstacle with steep sides, which separated the opposing lines, only the leading troops were able to gain a footing, and reinforcements found the greatest difficulty in advancing to their support. During the night several determined hostile counter-attacks were repulsed with heavy loss, but eventually, after several hours hard fighting the attackers were forced back to their own trenches . . . on the left all the objectives were gained, and the enemy's front trenches occupied on a front of nearly a mile, from Hill 380, five hundred yards north of Doldzelli to the enemy's work on Hill P 4½. During the following days the captured positions were consolidated, in spite of repeated counter-attacks." No further attack was made on the Doiran front during the next fortnight. "Preparations had been commenced," writes General Milne, "with a view to taking advantage of the commanding position gained on the ridge, by advancing our line on its western slopes when information was received, that, owing to climatic and other reasons, it had been found necessary again to postpone the allied operations on the right bank of the Vardar and in the vicinity of the Monastir. Finally, I received instructions that May 8th had been selected as the date for the recommencement of the allied advance; on which date the army under my command should again concentrate its main effort in the vicinity of Doiran."

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The renewed offensive was to take place east and west of the Vardar ; the British attacking again on the Vardar-Doiran front, the French, Serbs, and Italians along their whole line west of the Vardar. The principal British attack was again in the vicinity of Lake Doiran, but on a more restricted front. The main attack to be by the 26th Division on Petit Couronné Hill. The 22nd Division at the same time operating beyond the positions on the west of the " Pip " ridge, gained by them in the April action, with the object of advancing the line between the ridge and the village of Krastali.

The 60th Division was to attack immediately west of the 22nd, and to advance the portion of their front between Krastali and Waggon Hill, near the village of Bekirli, with the object of straightening out the front in that quarter and bringing it into line with the advanced portions that the 22nd Division had previously gained. The carrying out of the operation was assigned to the 179th Brigade, whose sectors immediately faced the ground to be captured.

The 179th Brigade made their first move forward on the night of May 8th-9th, at the same time that the attack further east commenced. The force employed comprised one and a half companies of the Kensingtons and London Scottish and two companies of the Queen's Westminsters, with 521st Company R.E., and a pioneer company. A company of the Civil Service was to support. The objectives for the advance were " Bastion Hill," " Tomato Hill," " Single Tree Hill," " The Turtleback," and " Westbury Hill "; hills of moderate elevation a short distance from the enemy's forward line, and to the north-east of Bekirli. There was to be no preliminary Artillery fire, and as little rifle as possible ; the bayonet to be used in preference.

All the objectives were gained without encountering serious resistance, and the captured positions were quickly consolidated and wired, the enemy apparently being taken by surprise. They attempted no counter-attacks, contenting

themselves for the time being with shelling the captured positions.

The ground gained was further extended on the following night when the Queen's Westminsters carried out a second advance and seized "Goldie's Hill," a prominent eminence still farther forward. The push forward created a salient in the new line, extending between "Bastion" and "Tomato Hill," with "Goldie's Hill," well forward, as the apex. This gain of ground greatly improved the local situation: from "Goldie's Hill," in particular, and in a lesser degree from the other points seized on the night of the 8th, the British were able to obtain a command of view over the plain eastward and north to the enemy's positions at Devedzeli village and the Selimli fords on that side. The enemy was, moreover, now excluded from a considerable portion of the plain, and their advanced position menaced.

The Bulgars were quick to realise what the loss of these positions meant for them; and two counter-attacks, supported by heavy Artillery fire, were launched during the 10th. Both were, however, beaten back by the Queen's Westminsters who garrisoned the position. The enemy then made energetic efforts to drive us off by incessant bombardments, specially concentrating their fire on "Goldie's Hill."

The Civil Service Rifles, who moved up and relieved the London Scottish and Queen's Westminsters, held "Goldie's Hill" with "Tomato" and "Single Tree" hills from May 10th onwards, were shelled persistently by day and night, with the object of rendering the positions untenable. Ten batteries were counted at one time, firing on "Goldie's Hill" from different directions; and on one night it was estimated that upwards of six hundred shells fell on and around the hill. On our side the strengthening of the positions gained was carried on continuously all along the new line, night after night; working parties digging fresh trenches on the hill slopes, and everywhere extending the wire. The work was carried on from dusk to dawn,

in spite of the enemy's shell fire, and a good many casualties resulted. Strong advanced picquets and patrols pushed out in advance along the ravines in front of the hills, protecting the working parties from counter-attacks. By day it was impossible to proceed with the work as the ground was in full view of the enemy's numerous and heavy Artillery. The working parties, together with the trench garrisons and the protective troops advanced at night, were, in the daytime, withdrawn under cover, sheltering in gullies and nullahs in rear of the hills. Sentry groups, with signallers, held the trenches in the daytime, and sufficed to give timely warning of any threatening move of the enemy.

Another push forward was made on May 15th, resulting in a further straightening of the general line of front to the south of "Goldie's Hill," and taking in "Basin Hill," and "Piton 4" in advance of "Bastion Hill." Beyond that it was not found necessary to advance.

The general attack along the allied front elsewhere had been practically checked at all points, and was coming to a standstill, with but little advantage gained. On the extreme right the 77th Brigade, held up by heavy casualties and the difficulties of the Jumeaux ravine, were not successful either at first or ultimately: on their left the 7th Oxford and Bucks Light Infantry, supported later by a company of the 7th Berks, carried the Petit Couronné, and held on against repeated counter-attacks all night; but the small remnant that held on had to be withdrawn at noon the next day, and all further efforts abandoned.

Across the Vardar to the west, in like manner the French, Serbs, and Italians had been foiled, and were unable to make headway against the mountain positions held, in superior force, by their opponents, the First Bulgarian Army. The action in that quarter continued, with ever-lessening prospect of success, until May 21st. After that it was found impossible to continue, and three days

later, on May 24th, General Sarraill issued orders for offensive operations to cease.

The 179th Brigade held its position, continually shelled as before, until June 5th. The rest of the Division had by that time quitted the line, on relief by the 26th Division : the two divisions having been ordered on May 24th to exchange places in the line ; the 60th Division was to occupy the sectors facing the Petit Couronné, near Lake Doiran, the 179th Brigade following in due course. The 180th and 181st Brigades were withdrawn from the line between May 26th and 28th, and concentrated, preparatory to taking over the new sectors. Further orders were, however, received by the G.O.C. on June 1st, changing their destination. Evidences of an early move had been apparent during May : calls during that month had been made on the Train for men and animals for Egypt ; and during the month, between five and six hundred men, and about a thousand mules were drafted away. Early in June Colonel Dalbiac, commanding the Train, left for home, and the command was taken by Lieutenant-Colonel Maconochie-Wellwood, R.A.S.C.

The Division was now ordered to move back to Salonika, the G.O.C. being informed that it was to embark for Egypt.

The move down commenced at once ; the 180th and 181st Brigades proceeding by Hadji Junas, Sarigol, Amberkeui, and Naresh, once more reached Uchanta camp, on June 5th and 9th respectively. The 179th Brigade quitted the line on the night of June 5th and 6th, and accompanied by Divisional Head-quarters followed the route to Uchanta, arriving on June 11th.

At Salonika all the pack mules were handed in, and wheeled transport received in its place. The embarkations took place between June 14th and 20th, on which date the 179th Brigade, the last to leave, sailed. It was only after the transports were at sea, that it was officially announced to commanding officers that their destination was Alexandria,

Two rather good stories current in the Division while on the Doiran front are worth recording. General Bulfin always kept a strong picquet on the Vardar, to prevent any endeavour of the enemy to penetrate between ourselves and the French. One day, three Bulgars, sick of "war's alarms," decided to surrender. They waded down the river till they came to the picquet, the whole of the men of which were fishing. They at once shouted to the Bulgars to go away as they were disturbing the fish. The Bulgars accordingly moved along the shore, and finally surrendered to an A.S.C. unit, some six miles in rear of the picquet.

The other story is that when the rains were on, and the bottom had come out of all the roads, some men riding up from Salonika saw an A.S.C. man of the 60th Division standing up to his knees in mud in the middle of what used to be the road. Asked what he was doing there, he replied that he was a lorry driver ; and when asked where his lorry was, said that he was standing on the hood of the lorry, and waiting for the rain to stop before starting to dig it out !

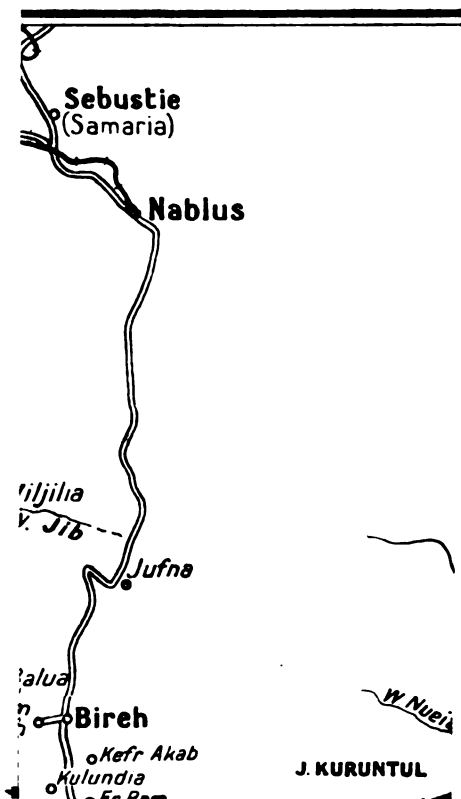
CHAPTER XII

GOING INTO THE LINE IN PALESTINE

THE transports conveying the Division arrived at Alexandria between June 18th and 22nd, after touching at the island of Mudros. All arrived safely except the *Cestrian*, which was torpedoed in the Ægean, and sunk, when twelve hours out from Salonika. No lives were lost, fortunately, but all the animals, and the vehicles of the Civil Service Rifles went down with the ship.

On landing at Alexandria the troops entrained for the base camp of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force at Moascar, near Ismailia, on the Suez Canal, by Lake Timsah. Headquarters arrived, and opened the camp on July 4th. The Train, for the time being, remained at Alexandria, the transport base of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force, reorganising and refitting. The Division in the impending operations in Palestine, was to rely entirely on part wheel and part camel transport.

From a fortnight to three weeks were passed in camp, during which time the Division was re-equipped on the Egyptian establishment. Training was carried out without intermission, morning and evening, under direction of the Brigadiers, and the close continuous supervision of the G.O.C. From 5.30 to 8 a.m., intensive training and brigade tactical exercises and instructional demonstrations, bombing practice, and musketry formed the staple of the daily programme, with, in the afternoon, when the sun had lost its power, and evening, route marching; also much appreciated bathing parades in Lake Timsah, and sports and recreations in camp. It was the hottest time of the year in Egypt, and the daytime was spent by all resting in camp. The men had to wear their sun helmets in their tents, strict orders being further given as to special care



to be taken to avoid unnecessary exposure to the sun. Owing to these precautions, there were but few cases of sun-stroke. Three days' leave to Cairo and Alexandria was granted to officers and N.C.O.s not on duty, a privilege that was much appreciated, and taken the fullest advantage of. The move forward across the Sinai Desert to Palestine began on July 5th and 6th, when the 180th Brigade, the first to arrive in Egypt, started for a two days' march along the canal, by night, to Kantara, where the desert railway started to Deir-el-Belah, a coast village about ten miles south-west of Gaza, the rail-head in Palestine. The 181st Brigade started on the 10th and 11th, followed two days later by the 179th Brigade. Divisional Head-quarters left Ismailia on the 14th, and opened at Deir-el-Belah next day. The troops travelled in open trucks with an awning to keep off the sun, a jolting and trying performance; the journey of one hundred and thirty miles taking twelve hours to accomplish. The whole Division had reached the front, and concentrated at Deir-el-Belah by July 23rd, in readiness to proceed to its allotted section of the line.

Speaking of the arrival of the Division in Palestine, Mr. W. T. Money, in his book, *How Jerusalem was Won* (p. 30), says: "The 60th Division came over from Salonika, and we were delighted to have them; for they not only gave us General Bulfin as the XXI Corps Commander, but set us all an example of dash and doggedness which earned them a record worthy of the best in the history of the Great War—no one had any misgivings about that cheery crowd."

The coming of the Division had been first made known to the troops in front of Gaza in the middle of June, on the same day that the army in Palestine first learnt that General Allenby had been appointed to relieve Sir Archibald Murray in the command of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force.

No time was lost, during the fortnight that the Division halted at Deir-el-Belah, in resuming and pressing forward

the courses of intensive training started at Moascar. Brigade exercises with "wave" attack operations, rifle-range practice, and specialist demonstrations again went on daily. Parties of officers were, at the same time, sent up the line to get an idea of the country, in preparation for the move into the line. The sea bathing in the evenings was greatly enjoyed by all ; the camps being within a short march from the beach. The village of Deir-el-Belah fronted an open roadstead, and was used at that time as an auxiliary naval base, for landing stores in surf-boats, from steamers anchored a short way out.

Orders for the Division to relieve the 53rd Division in the Shellal-Gamli section of the line, from sixteen to twenty miles inland, on the Wadi Ghuzze, were received on July 26th. The relief was carried out on the 28th and two following days. Divisional Head-quarters were opened at Sheik Nuran, four miles south-west of Shellal on July 30th.

At that time the British line of front extended from the sea coast north of Deir-el-Belah to Shellal and El Gamli on the Wadi Ghuzze, a wide water-course, from a hundred and fifty to two hundred yards across, with high steep banks, flowing into the Mediterranean at Tel-el-Ajjul ; but dry in the summer, except where there were wells.

Facing the Gaza works, for about eight miles, the opposing lines were less than a mile apart. Beyond, owing to the lack of water supply in the area, the line was drawn back to follow the course of the Wadi Ghuzze, which in the rainy season became a raging torrent ; and in its bed large reservoirs and tanks, supplied by the pipe-line across the Sinai Desert, from the Nile and Sweet Water Canal, had been constructed during July at Shellal, and in the vicinity. At Deir-el-Belah, the Division took over, from the Camel Transport Corps, the camels on which it was to rely for bringing up water, rations, and ammunition during the coming operations. The move to Shellal was made in two nights, the troops bivouacking during the

daytime. The marches proved hot and trying work ; but little air stirred, the ground was rough, and the sand deep and loose.

The Division had just taken over its section of the line, when, on August 2nd, to the infinite regret of all, General Bulfin quitted the command to take over command of the newly formed XXI Corps. The parting from the distinguished officer, to whom the 60th owed their rescue from a draft-finding to be a first-class fighting division ; and who had been at their head on the Western Front and in Macedonia, was a parting that all felt keenly, and it was intensified because of the personal respect and affectionate regard that he had won from all ranks.

Captain Elliot, in his *History of the 20th London Regiment*, says, " The universal regret felt throughout the Division at the departure of General Bulfin, was tempered by the knowledge that he was receiving promotion, long deserved. During the eighteen months of his command, General Bulfin had frequently had to make calls on the men which had taxed their capacities of physique and morale to the utmost. These calls had invariably been answered with loyalty and enthusiasm. No divisional commander had earned the confidence of his officers and men in a larger degree. Probably no Division had a greater measure of Divisional esprit de corps than the 60th. Certainly none was more infused with the spirit of mutual help between units. How far this feeling was due to General Bulfin's personality and leadership, only those who actually served under him in the Division can realise."

General Bulfin's appointment to the XXI Corps was brought about by the reorganisation of the forces in Palestine by the Commander-in-Chief, General Allenby. The Infantry and Artillery were now grouped as two corps, numbered XX and XXI, and which were, respectively, thus constituted : XX Corps (Lieutenant-General Sir Philip Chetwode), 10th, 53rd, 60th, and 74th Divisions, with twenty-three batteries (mountain, heavy, and siege) ;

XXI Corps (Lieutenant-General Sir Edward Bulfin), 52nd, 54th, and 75th Divisions, with eighteen batteries (mountain, heavy, and siege). The Desert Mounted Corps, with the Australian, New Zealand, and Yeomanry Mounted Division, the 7th Mounted Brigade and the Imperial Camel Corps Brigade, were separate organisations.

Several changes in the Divisional Staff took place at this time. General Bulfin took with him as G.S.S.O. of the XXI Corps, Lieutenant-Colonel E. T. Humphreys, who had been G.S.O.I. of the 60th Division ever since the Sutton-Veny days. Colonel Humphreys was succeeded in the Division by Lieutenant-Colonel A. G. C. Dawnay, but within a month ill-health compelled him to give up the appointment. Major Temperley, of the Norfolk Regiment, was then appointed G.S.O.I. of the Division. Brigadier-General N. Simpson-Baikie, who had been C.R.A. of the Division since the Sutton-Veny period, accompanied General Bulfin as B.G.R.A. to the XXI Corps. He was succeeded, temporarily, by Lieutenant-Colonel H. N. Drake, until October 27th, when Brigadier-General W. A. Robinson took up the post of C.R.A.

Brigadier-General J. Hill, C.B., D.S.O., relieved Brigadier-General F. M. Carleton in the command of the 180th Brigade, until, at the end of September, he was appointed to the command of the 52nd (Lowland) Division. He was succeeded by Brigadier-General C. F. Watson, D.S.O., C.M.G. Colonel Henriques, who had organised the R.E. companies of the Division in September 1914, and commanded them ever since as C.R.E., in France and Macedonia, quitted the Division to return to England on August 8th. His successor as C.R.E. was Major C. B. Thompson, R.E.

Major-General J. M. Shea, C.B., D.S.O., a Cavalry officer of distinction of the Indian Army, who had held a Brigade Command on the Western Front, succeeded General Bulfin in command of the Division, which, as subsequent events proved, found themselves exceptionally

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fortunate in having him as their commander. The Shellal-Gamli section of the line, taken over by the 60th Division, consisted of a chain of strong posts, a hundred and fifty yards apart and well wired, intended to be held as platoon posts. Sentry groups were posted there at night, the battalions having their bivouacs near by in small wadis and nullahs. On the open ground in front of the line, on the northern side of the Wadi Ghuzze, the enemy's nearest outposts were some ten or twelve miles away. The plain was watched nightly by patrols of the Australian Light Horse, on guard from sunset to sunrise, so surprise was practically out of the question. The occasional reconnoitring visits of one or two enemy aeroplanes, keeping very high up, were the only signs of enemy activity east of the Gaza sector of the trenches. The Turkish line of defences ran from the sea by Gaza, in a south-easterly direction to Beersheba. Gaza, itself, by July 1917, had been converted into a powerfully armed and elaborately strengthened fortress, very strongly garrisoned. It had been made so, in particular, since the second battle of Gaza, in the previous April.

To guard Gaza, on its landward side, to the south-east, and prevent the place being enveloped, a series of formidably entrenched, continuous positions, strongly wired, had been constructed, along the greater part of the thirty miles of high ground, between Gaza and Beersheba. In addition to the redoubts and entrenched works immediately protecting Gaza, the Turks had constructed six systems of redoubts and entrenchments along the ridge known as Sihan, Atawineh, Baha, Raschid, Hareira, and Kauwukah works. Beyond the Kauwukah works there was a gap of very difficult ground extending for four and a half miles to the Beersheba defences which had been left open. The Beersheba defences formed a detached and separate position beyond the gap. The tract of country between Beersheba and the Hareira defences was waterless, except at Sheria, five miles north of Hareira, where there was a good supply.

Beersheba itself had an adequate water supply from seventeen wells.

General Allenby, in his despatch of December 16, 1917, thus set out his plan of attack on the Turkish Gaza-Beersheba front : " As I had decided to strike the main blow against the left flank of the Turkish position, Hareira-Sheria, the capture of Beersheba was a necessary preliminary to this operation, in order to secure the water supplies at that place, and to give room for the deployment of the attacking force on the high ground to the north and north-west of Beersheba, from which direction I intended to attack the Hareira-Sheria line. This front of attack was chosen for the following reasons. The enemy's works in this sector were less formidable than elsewhere, and were of easier approach than other parts of his defences. When Beersheba was in our hands we should have an open flank against which to operate, and I could make full use of our superiority in mounted troops ; moreover, our success here offered prospects of pursuing our advantage, and forcing the enemy to abandon the rest of his fortified positions, which no other line of attack would afford. It was important in order to keep the enemy in doubt up to the last moment, as to the real point of attack, that an attack should be made on the enemy's right at Gaza, in conjunction with the main operation."

During the earlier part of August, owing to the oppressive heat at midday, the men's training was practically confined to exercises and drills in the early morning and evening. Two hours were so occupied, up to between 7 and 8 a.m., and two hours from 4.30 p.m. to sunset. An hour in the forenoon was usually devoted to lectures for the officers and N.C.O.s, and theoretical instruction. As the weeks passed and the daytime heat became less trying, and the men becoming more inured to the climate, the training courses were extended, until ultimately the whole day was actively employed. Divisional and brigade training was taken up in all forms ; tactical schemes, in

which all arms trained together, by brigade groups, ensuring co-operation, were the order of the day. Night operations were carried on, on a large scale, the troops marching out often over the difficult country, intersected with wadis and nullahs, and keeping direction by the compass ; the operation usually concluding with attacks at daybreak on prepared positions. There was also field firing ; artillery barrage, and wire-cutting exercises, with the infantry following up close in rear of the barrage ; practical assaults on trenches, gas-mask and respirator testing practice, and smoke cloud demonstrations, in addition to specialist training courses, bombing, bayonet fighting, physical drill, and route marching in battle order. As part of the training the troops were kept on a limited supply of water to accustom them as far as possible to go without, owing to the possibility of very scanty supplies being available later on.

A tribute to the zeal and energy that all ranks of the Division put into their training was paid, after the war, by Lord Allenby, in a speech he made on the occasion of his being made a freeman of the City of London. He said : " Before it attacked Beersheba it was training so hard to keep fit that the General Officer Commanding had to order his men to eat and drink more, and not work so hard."

The main camp of the Division was at El Shauth, five or six miles to the south-west of Gamli, whither brigades withdrew temporarily, on relief from the line. At El Shauth special training courses in trench attacks were carried out, utilising the former Turkish trenches there, constructed a year previously at the time of Sir Archibald Murray's advance across the Sinai Desert. The positions at El Shauth, in front of Shellal, had been elaborately fortified by the Turks, but had been abandoned by them for the Gaza position.

Football and hockey in the evenings, after the day's work, provided the usual recreations, with sports meetings and visits to Brigade and Battalion Head-quarters at frequent

intervals ; by the divisional concert parties, the universally appreciated, popular " Barnstormers " and the " Roosters." Leave to Cairo and Alexandria was granted during August and September, until the first week in October, when, as the time approached for the opening move on Beersheba, leave was stopped.

A series of reconnaissances and Staff rides by large parties of officers was carried out during August and September, also in October down to the eve of the concentration moves for the attack on Beersheba. They were designed, for one reason, to accustom the Turks to seeing movements of British forces in the neighbourhood of Beersheba, apparently for no particular purpose, with a view to deceiving them, and putting them off their guard when the actual advance took place. The main reason, however, was to give officers a good working knowledge of the intricacies of the intervening ground and the approaches to the enemy's positions, and so enable them to memorise the local features of the terrain. The Corps Commander, the Divisional and Brigade Commanders, the Staff and senior officers of all arms and departmental units took part, there being usually from three to four hundred officers present. El Shauth and Gamli were the usual places of assembly and the reconnaissances were, on occasion, pushed, by some of the parties, up to within two or three miles of the outermost Beersheba works.

The procedure was usually as follows : a screen of mounted troops would first set off before daybreak to form a protecting cordon. The Turkish vedettes and advanced picquets always retired on their approach. Under cover of this screen, the officers, dividing up into small parties, would ride out from the place of assembly independently ; each group or party having its own allotted task and area of ground to examine.

" These days," describes an Artillery officer who took part, " usually entailed a ride of at least forty miles. As

we approached the enemy positions, which consisted of a series of trenches or sangars, high up over the desert, and commanding the whole country over which we worked, the Turk would commence shelling and sniping. . . . The ground was tricky, and we could never be certain of being under cover from rifle fire, the country being cut up into small rises ; also the possibility of being surrounded and cut off by the Turkish Cavalry kept us continually on the qui vive. . . . As we withdrew the Turkish Cavalry would cautiously issue forth and occupy the positions they had temporarily withdrawn from earlier, in place of our Cavalry ; so it was very necessary not to lose one's way on the homeward journey."

CHAPTER XIII

BEERSHEBA

TOWARDS the end of October, General Allenby's preparations being complete, the whole force began its concentration in preparation for the attack on the Turkish positions. The Division was at last to have its opportunity. For fifteen months it had done its duty steadily and well at the front ; in a not too easy section of the line in France for five months, and then for nearly seven months in Macedonia, where, though they were not called upon for much serious fighting, they had to face the rigours of a Balkan winter. Now, at last, after a weary, grilling time in the desert, officers and men were at last to have an opportunity of showing how well they had assimilated the lessons which had been impressed upon them since General Bulfin had taken their training in hand. At last a future of action was foreshadowed ; months of hard fighting and strenuous marching over a trackless and difficult country, in a climate which drenched them to the skin in winter and burned them brown in the summer ; where water was scanty and rationing always difficult and often irregular. Their chance of making history had come—and they made it !

As stated in the preceding chapter the Commander-in-Chief's intentions were to carry the Beersheba defences, and roll up the Turkish line from its left. The principal operations, those against Beersheba, were to be carried out by the XX Corps and the bulk of the mounted troops. General Bulfin's XXI Corps was, at the same time, to operate against Gaza and the Turkish right centre south-east of that place, to delude the Turks into the belief that the main attack was again going to be on that section of their line ; for which purpose he was to commence a heavy bombardment of the Turkish lines some three days before



Photo by]

[Elliott & Fry, Ltd., 63, Baker Street

LIEUTENANT-GENERAL SIR JOHN SHEA, K.C.B., K.C.M.G., D.S.O., A.D.C.

the attack on Beersheba commenced ; but not to deliver an attack on the Turkish position until the result of the Beersheba battle was known. The XX Corps and the Desert Mounted Corps were to advance against Beersheba, which it was considered vital, on account of water difficulties, should be captured in one day. Having dealt with the enemy in Beersheba, the Corps, with the mounted troops on its right, was to move north-west against the Turkish left flank at Sheria and Hareira and envelop his left flank.

The concentration of the Corps, which was to have taken seven days, but owing to water difficulties extended to ten days, commenced on the night of October 20th-21st. The great essential to success was, of course, to keep all knowledge of the concentration of large bodies of troops in the neighbourhood of Beersheba from the enemy ; and it was fortunate that early in October our airmen obtained complete mastery of the air, and the destruction of two enemy planes produced a lack of enterprise on the part of their airmen which greatly assisted our plans. Nevertheless, the show was nearly given away by an enemy airman who flew very high overhead on October 29th, but who was chased and brought down by two of our airmen. On developing his camera plates photographs of our concentration were discovered.

All movements took place at night. Canteens, cook-houses, horse lines, temporary shelters, in fact anything that could indicate the presence of an army, were left standing to deceive the enemy ; while to prevent aircraft observation from detecting any change in areas, incoming troops took over bivouacs vacated by others, and the use of any new ground was strictly forbidden. No firing was permitted before daylight, any enemy posts encountered were to be dealt with by the bayonet.

The conditions of the projected operations required a certain variation of the normal equipment. The webbing valise was to be carried on the back ; all personal and other property for which there was no room in the pack had to

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be left behind. Officers and men were to carry two water-bottles ; one in reserve not to be touched except by special order from Head-quarters. All ranks were also to carry a mobile ration, as well as the ordinary iron ration. A certain proportion of officers, N.C.O.s, and specialist privates were to be kept back out of action as a first reinforcement. These parties consisted for infantry of nine officers and one hundred and seventeen other ranks per battalion. They were to form a reinforcement camp to provide escorts for convoys, etc.

The Corps began its movements on the night of October 20th-21st. Routes and distances were carefully allotted for every unit ; and as the whole country had been carefully reconnoitred, the concentration was carried out perfectly to time. The pace for the Infantry was calculated at not much over a mile an hour, owing to the rough and broken nature of most of the ground. On the night of October 21st-22nd, the 179th Brigade group was concentrated at Esani, for the development of water supply and protection of the supply depot. The remainder of the Division were concentrated in the Gamli-El Shauth area by the night of October 26th and 27th.

On the night of October 28th-29th the Division was concentrated as follows : Head-quarters, Esani ; then Rashid-Bek. The 179th Brigade group at Abu Ghalyun. The 180th Brigade group at Esani. The 181st Brigade group at Rashid-Bek.

On the night of October 30th-31st the whole Division moved to its position of assembly south of Beersheba. The Artillery was divided into a right and left group, to move with the right and left attacking Brigade respectively. The right group comprised the 303rd Artillery Brigade, the 18th Mountain Battery, and the Berkshire R.H.A. The left group the 301st and 302nd Artillery Brigades.

One Field Company, Royal Engineers, accompanied each group, to improve roads in front of columns ; while

one Field Company was held in readiness to move into Beersheba at short notice.

The night march, performed in brilliant moonlight, to the positions of deployment was successfully carried out; all units reaching their appointed positions up to time, in spite of the clouds of sand and dust encountered, and the roughness of the tracks.

The general plan of the attack aimed at capturing the hostile works between the Khalasa road and the Wadi Saba, with the Imperial Camel Corps and some Infantry, while the 53rd Division, further north, covered the left of the Corps. The Mounted Corps were to work round Beersheba further east.

As a preliminary to the main attack, and to enable the field guns to be brought into effective range for wire-cutting, the hill, known as "1070," a prominent feature some five hundred yards in front of the enemy's main line, was the first objective.

The 60th Division was formed up on the right of the 74th Division; with the 179th Brigade on the right, the 181st Brigade on the left, and the 180th Brigade in divisional reserve.

The 179th deployed in Scottish Wadi with the 2/15th on the right, the 2/14th on the left, the 2/18th in support, and the 2/13th in reserve.

The 181st had the 2/21st on the right, the 2/24th on the left, the 2/22nd in support, and the 2/21st in reserve.

At daybreak the guns began to bombard Hill 1070 on a front of 4,500 yards. There were in action 76 18-pounder field guns, 20 4.5 howitzers, 4 3.7 howitzers, while 8 60-pounders, 8 6-inch howitzers, and 4.5 howitzers were engaged in counter battery work.

About seven o'clock, dust and smoke obstructed observation for wire-cutting to such an extent that firing had to cease for half an hour or more, when it commenced again in front of the 179th Brigade.

At 8.15, the 181st Brigade reported that wire-cutting would be completed by 8.30, at which time they were within five hundred yards of their objective; and the intensive bombardment commencing, the 2/22nd and 2/24th went forward to the assault as the fire lifted, and in ten minutes all the works were captured, and the garrisons killed or in our hands, thus bringing to a successful close the first phase of the attack. In the meantime the 2/23rd had moved forward and prolonged the 2/22nd line; the 2/21st following in close support.

That the Turks on Hill 1070 were completely taken by surprise was evidenced by the general condition of the camp. Officers' tents with beds in disorder showed how the occupants had jumped from them hastily on the first sound of the opening bombardment; copper cauldrons containing partly cooked porridge were found, showing how the men had been hastily deprived of their breakfasts, as well as many other evidences of alarm and confusion. The same conditions were found later on, when the main position was captured.

About ninety prisoners were taken on Hill 1070; among them a German machine gun with its crew.

The first phase victoriously accomplished, the second, against the enemy's main line, had now to be entered upon. As soon as new observation posts were established the batteries galloped forward over the stony and uneven ground, broken here and there by shallow wadis, and commenced wire-cutting as soon as they got into position.

The objective entailed the reduction of the enemy's main line from the Khalasa road to the Wadi Saba, though the Artillery bombarded the whole line.

At about ten o'clock the enemy was observed to be evacuating a portion of the line, and the 181st Brigade reported ready to attack. About eleven o'clock the enemy threatened a counter-attack on the right front, but it did not materialise.

At 11.40, all was reported ready at Divisional Headquarters, and the 74th Division, also reporting ready, the general advance was ordered for 12.15.

As before the 181st Division were on the left, with the 2/23rd on their right, the 2/21st in the centre, the 2/24th on the left ; the 2/22nd remained as a reserve on Hill 1070. The attack was on a two-company front, each company in two waves.

The 2/14th and 2/15th pushed right through at once, gaining their objectives by 12.35. Little opposition was encountered by the 2/14th, but the 2/15th came under a heavy fire, which, however, did not check them, and they pushed through and silenced the guns.

When the first position was captured the 2/13th pushed on through the 2/14th and 2/15th, and occupied the high ground in advance ; only a few Turks were encountered, who offered but a feeble resistance.

Consolidation began at once, in spite of long-range Artillery fire which caused a good many casualties among the consolidating party.

During the afternoon the advanced company of the 2/13th observed two enemy 77-mm. guns in their front. They pushed on and engaged them with machine-gun fire ; the Turks soon abandoned the guns which the company captured.

The 181st Brigade, advancing under cover of an intensive bombardment, captured their objectives easily ; thanks largely to the excellent work of the 301st Artillery group. Everything went without a hitch, and not for one moment was touch lost between units.

The 181st Machine-gun Company rendered considerable help, and one section in particular did great execution among the enemy opposing the 231st Brigade of the 74th Division. By 1 p.m. the whole of the works between the Khalasa road and the Wadi Saba were in our hands.

During the afternoon the Divisional Reserve moved forward, and the 2/20th advanced to a bivouac in Westminster Wadi.

Some delay occurred to the west of the wadi, where the enemy had some 3,000 yards of trenches, and it was not until five o'clock that the 230th Brigade obtained possession of them.

At 9.30 p.m. information was received that Beersheba had fallen to the Desert Mounted Corps at 7.40. Immediately after the capture of the enemy's main line, the 302nd Field Artillery Brigade was detached, and moved forward to pursue the enemy with fire, and deal with any hostile counter-attacks, while guns of the right group were allotted the task of dealing with enemy works south of the Khalasa-Beersheba road, should any of the enemy be holding the ground there.

The Division was ordered to bivouac on the captured position, with the outpost line formed by the two attacking brigades. No troops were to pass through except for the capture of enemy guns, which might be undertaken at the discretion of subordinate commanders.

Considering the strength of the positions attacked the casualties were not heavy, amounting to 3 officers and 67 other ranks killed, 13 officers and 358 other ranks wounded. The heaviest loss was in the 181st Brigade, who lost 2 officers and 36 other ranks killed, and 6 officers and 175 other ranks wounded.

The Division took 31 officers and 302 other ranks prisoners, and captured 2 field guns, 5 machine guns, and a considerable amount of ammunition and equipment. The following messages were received next morning by the Divisional-Commander :

From General Sir P. Chetwode, Commanding the Corps :

"I heartily congratulate you and your gallant troops on their fine performance yesterday."

From the Commander-in-Chief :

"Heartiest congratulations on your splendid success, due to brilliant Staff work and bravery of troops."

CHAPTER XIV

KAUWUKAH-SHERIA

EARLY the following morning the Division was at work clearing up the battlefield, a not very pleasant task as regarded the enemy's dug-outs and bivouacs. Captain Elliot, in his history of the 2/20th Regiment, writes : " The bivouacs where the Turks had apparently slept, when not actually on duty, were a mass of filth, paper, and refuse, haunted by millions of flies. Here and there small shelters had been dug into the banks of wadis, and these, too, were unimaginably filthy. It was some encouragement to us to see the many traces of our Artillery bombardment. The wire, though many yards thick, had been cut in several places. . . . Here and there we found the bodies of the dead, and in one place where the enemy's defence had been particularly resolute, the bodies of one British officer and five of his men, beside those of ten Turks."

The 519th and 521st, less two sections, Field Companies R.E., moved into Beersheba to assist in the development of the water supply.

During the afternoon the 2/23rd Regiment was sent into Beersheba, the commanding officer to take over the duties of administrative commandant.

Of the seventeen wells in Beersheba, two had been destroyed and the remainder prepared for demolition. The enemy had intended to leave Beersheba a nest of booby traps, as they were prepared everywhere ; but fortunately the German engineer in charge was on leave in Jerusalem and had not returned before the attack ; consequently the traps were not connected up to the detonators. In the railway station twenty cases of gelignite with concealed detonators were found, sufficient to blow up the whole place.

The Turkish hospital in Beersheba was taken over and the 2/4th and 2/6th Field Ambulances, in view of an immediate advance, had orders to close down their dressing stations and move into their respective brigade areas, evacuating all their casualties into the Beersheba hospital—not quite a sanitary establishment according to Colonel Dowsett, who writes: “This was our first (but by no means our last or worst) taste of taking over a Turkish hospital, with his own sick and wounded remaining; it was not pleasant. Beersheba, as left by the Turks, was the most insanitary place imaginable, the swarms of flies were beyond comprehension. There were about one hundred sick and wounded Turks, too bad for them to get away, and of these many had their wounds still open and undressed; while those that were dressed had most of their dressings blood-stained: the result being that every wounded man was covered with flies, and those that were too feeble to brush them away were literally black from head to foot—a seething mass of flies—all the beds (some one hundred and fifty, or more) were wooden trestle beds, and every one was swarming with bugs to such an extent that it was impossible to deal with them; so that every bed and all the bedding had to be burned.”

The first successful blow had been struck, and we had a firm footing on the enemy's flank; but more had to be done, and that quickly, to exploit our success before the enemy had time to recover.

The next step towards carrying out the Commander-in-Chief's plan for rolling up the Turkish line involved the capture of the enemy's main line about Hareira and Sheria, which would enable the Cavalry to get through to Nejile, where there was an excellent water supply, advance to the neighbourhood of Huj, take the enemy's line in rear, and fall on his line of retreat. The position to be attacked was an extremely strong one, running from the Jerusalem-Beersheba railway, some five miles south-east of Hareira, across the Gaza-Beersheba road to the Wadi Sheria. On

the north side of the wadi was a strong redoubt covering Hareira. The eastern portion of the line was called the Kauwukah system, and on towards Hareira, the Rushdi system. The two were linked up by a strong line of trenches, while a light railway ran from the Rushdi system to near Sheria. Water and transport difficulties proved greater than we had expected, causing a delay of two days, which, while it certainly gave our men a rest, was of inestimable value to the Turk, enabling him to move his troops as he desired.

On November 1st the 53rd Division, with the Imperial Camel Corps on its right, moved northwards to the Towel-abu-Jerwal, to cover the right flank of the Corps in its advance to Sheria. The enemy's force retiring from Beersheba had gone to the northward, under the impression, apparently, that we intended to advance along the Hebron road ; and he had massed a considerable force, throwing in all his reserves, in the neighbourhood of Kuweilfeh to stop us. They succeeded in holding up the 53rd Division, and it was not until the 6th, after four days' desperate fighting, that the 53rd got possession of that place. November 4th was an anxious day ; the 53rd were apparently held up, and the Intelligence Department had lost, for the moment, the whereabouts of one Turkish Division, which complicated the situation, as it might have suddenly appeared on our right flank at Sheria, creating a most serious situation. However, the situation was cleared up next morning ; the lost division was, it seems, sent to reinforce Beersheba, but arriving too late had been sent to Kuweilfeh instead.

On the afternoon of November 2nd, Divisional Headquarters and the 180th Brigade group moved to a bivouac about one and a half miles south-west of Beersheba, where the Khalasa-Beersheba road crosses the Wadi Sha'ai, the 179th and 181st Brigade group following the next day, the 180th moving to a point one mile south of Teiaha. During their march bombs were dropped on the 179th

Brigade, fortunately without causing any casualties. Orders were issued for the attack on Kauwukah to be made on November 6th. On November 4th the Division moved into bivouac south of El Muweileh, the 181st Brigade relieving the 230th Brigade (74th Division). During the day careful reconnaissances were made of the system to be attacked, including all possible lines of deployment, routes and gun positions.

On the night of November 5th-6th the Division concentrated for the attack. The general plan was for the 74th Division on the right to roll up the enemy from the flank and hold him while the 60th Division on their left made a frontal attack on the Kauwukah system. This plan rendered any attack on the flank of the 60th Division impossible.

The brigades detailed for the attack were the 180th on the right and the 179th on the left, each supported by an Artillery group, the 181st Brigade being in divisional reserve. One brigade of the 10th Division operated on the left of the 179th Brigade.

At 3.30 a.m. the attacking brigades moved forward to their positions of readiness, and at 8 a.m. advanced in conformity with the movements of the 74th Division, and by half-past the Artillery, who had now moved forward, commenced wire-cutting.

It was not an ideal country over which to attack a strong position. It was of a gently undulating character, very open and bare, with a stony surface; throughout the battle no cover for the attacking Infantry was to be found between them and each successive enemy position. The Turkish trenches, too, were deep and well concealed, affording the defenders ample cover.

The 74th Division made rapid progress, and the Division was able to move forward in Artillery formation. By 12.15 p.m. it was reported that the wire was satisfactorily cut on the right bank of the Wadi Samarra; while the 74th Division had carried all their objectives and their advanced troops reached the railway.

The Division was ordered to commence the attack on its first objective.

The 180th Brigade had the 2/18th and 2/19th as the assaulting battalions, the 2/20th in close support, and the 2/17th in reserve. The 179th Brigade had the 2/13th and 2/16th Battalions in the front line, the 2/15th in support, and the London Scottish and the Loyal North Lancashires in reserve.

On the right the 2/18th and 2/19th pushed on rapidly over the undulating and open ground, with two companies of the 2/20th in close support. In spite of a heavy barrage put down by the enemy, they were quickly driven out of their works.

D Company 2/20th, under Captain Reynolds, finding a gap on the right of the 2/18th, pushed through and captured a strong post, killing or capturing the whole of the garrison. The 2/18th, under Lieutenant-Colonel Norton, took two 77-mm. guns and sixty prisoners. The 2/19th took twenty prisoners.

On the left, the 2/13th and 2/16th Battalions, in face of a very heavy fire, quickly carried their first objective; the 2/15th passed through them, and, closely followed by the 2/19th, by 1.30 had carried all their objectives. On their left the attacking troops of the 10th Division followed about half an hour later.

During the assault the right battalion of the 180th Division received great assistance from the Lewis guns of the 231st Brigade (74th Division), which successfully prevented the Turks from moving away some of their guns in rear of Kauwukah. The battalion, though they collected the guns, in a sporting spirit forebore to claim the capture as theirs.

By 2 p.m. the whole Kauwukah systems were in our hands. Patrols of the 179th Brigade, pushed forward in front of the conquered position, met with little opposition beyond occasional heavy machine-gun fire; further troops were pushed forward, and very soon the whole Rushdi

position was also in our hands, and the way clear for the advance to Sheria and its much-coveted water supply.

About half-past three orders were received to establish a strong bridge-head across the wadi north of Sheria, the 10th Division being ordered to relieve the Division in the conquered area.

On reaching their objectives, the 180th Brigade had been ordered to throw out outposts on the high ground on the northern slope of Kauwukah, overlooking the station and water-tanks of Sheria.

The 181st Brigade, which had been in reserve, but advancing as the other two brigades gained ground, was ordered to move at once to Sheria and, in conjunction with the 180th Brigade, to form the most suitable bridge-head that the ground permitted; to cover the water supply at that place, holding the line from Barrata to a point north of the railway, the 180th Brigade carrying on the line to the south-west. Each brigade was supported by its Artillery group, Bayley's group supporting the 181st Brigade. The 74th Division was ordered by the Corps to swing up their line and conform with the Division's line defending the bridge-head. It was not known, however, at this time whether the crossing at Sheria had been secured. Meanwhile D Company of the 2/20th Regiment had pressed on with vigour, and though unsupported or protected on either flank, had established themselves on a small hill some five hundred yards south-east of Sheria station. In their advance they had captured some prisoners and two machine guns, besides inflicting considerable losses on the enemy. About 5 p.m. Captain Reynolds, who was in command, sent back a message describing his position, and suggesting that as the Turks held Sheria in force it would be advisable to drive them out at once before they could be reinforced. On receiving the report the Brigadier at once ordered the 2/20th and 2/17th Regiments forward to secure Tel-es-Sheria and establish a bridge-head, covering the railway viaduct over the wadi.

Soon after 7 p.m. two and a half companies of the 2/20th, under Captain Travers, advanced, the enemy making a fierce resistance with rifle and machine-gun fire. An ammunition dump, just south of the station, exploded, illuminating the whole countryside, rendering any further approach to the station impossible. Outposts were pushed out, and the troops lay in the open awaiting further developments. Patrols sent out to find crossings met with heavy machine-gun fire.

The 2/17th had by this time arrived to co-operate in the attack, and their commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Dear, together with Lieutenant-Colonel Borton commanding the 2/22nd, conferred with the officer commanding the 2/20th; and they decided that, provided the explosions had ceased, the attack should be launched at 3.30 a.m. Meanwhile the 181st Brigade had advanced in accordance with orders to act in conjunction with the 180th Brigade. Uncertain whether or not the crossing had been secured, they were overtaken by darkness, with the ground in front of them unreconnoitred. A reconnaissance was at once undertaken by the battalion commanders, with a view of crossing the wadi at two points—the 2/22nd and 2/23rd about five hundred yards east of the railway, and the 2/21st and 2/24th further east to secure the high ground from Barrata to the railway. The 2/22nd and 2/23rd moved forward during the reconnaissance to the Samarra ridge—the 2/21st and 2/24th had moved through a misunderstanding towards Barrata, and touch with them was lost till next morning. The reconnaissance having made clear the position of the 180th Brigade, the 2/22nd were ordered to move in touch with the 2/20th; Brigade Headquarters and the 2/23rd soon after joined them.

The explosions in the station continued incessantly until about 2.30 a.m., and the 2/22nd not having arrived in time to commence the attack at 3.30 a.m., the start was postponed until 5.30. It was decided that there was to be no Artillery preparation for the attack; and beyond

the support of a few machine guns the attackers were to rely on the bayonet.

At daybreak the attack was delivered, two battalions of the 181st Brigade, the 2/22nd and 2/23rd, on the east of the railway, and two of the 180th, the 2/20th and 2/17th, on the west. The enemy put up a determined resistance ; but nothing could resist the energy of the attack, and in a short time the whole position was in our hands, and our line pushed forward to a ridge some 1,500 yards north of the station. During the day the enemy launched several small counter-attacks, which were easily repulsed ; a very strong counter-attack was delivered against the portion of the line held by the 180th Brigade, about half-past nine, which succeeded in reaching within two hundred yards of our line, but was completely broken up by machine-gun and rifle fire, supported by our Artillery.

Captain Travers, of the 2/26th, was shot dead by a Turk who stepped out of a hospital marquee. The marquee was found to be full of Turkish snipers—there were no survivors !

A rather amusing episode in connection with the Cavalry Ammunition Column is recorded. Fortunately it turned out to be amusing, for it might have been disastrous. After Beersheba the heavy waggon echelons of the column had been brigaded together and placed under direct command of the Corps. The intention was for this column each day to proceed to some pre-arranged spot and notify its locality to Divisional Ammunition Columns, which would then send their light limbered waggons to the selected spot to refill. On November 7th the place selected was Tel-el-Sheria, and the columns directed to report there at 11 a.m. This order was actually received on the morning of the 6th, the Staff Officer who gave it believing that the place would by then be in our hands, whereas it was not actually so till the following afternoon. About nine o'clock on the morning of the 7th the column was seen steadily marching towards the enemy, to the no

small consternation of the Staff Officer who had given the order. Fortunately the Commanding Officer noticed that things didn't seem to be quite peaceful in Tel-el-Sheria, so decided to lie low till he could ascertain how matters stood ; so fortunately nothing serious occurred.

The following extract from the Australian official history of one of the many incidents in the desultory fighting which took place all day on the Sheria position shows up the fighting spirit of the Division.

"Towards sunset the light horsemen rejoiced to see the waves of the Reserve Brigade of the 60th Division advancing from their left rear. The Brigade came steadily on, despite intense Turkish shelling. It was dusk when they reached the Australians, who cheered them as they had themselves been cheered by the Londoners in the morning. But this was no madcap exploit by a few horsemen. The Infantry had strength and depth. 'How far are the blighters away?' asked a sergeant. 'Five hundred yards,' replied an Australian. 'Then in five minutes,' said the Londoner, 'we'll be into them.' Some of the Australians rose to join in the sport and marched away with the Infantry into the growing darkness. A few minutes later those who remained behind heard a hoarse roar above the rattle of machine-gun and rifle fire. The Londoners had charged home with the bayonet and the Turkish resistance was finally broken."

During the whole of the 7th, practically, the Division was engaged in severe local fighting ; the enemy's shell fire at times being very heavy. Major Gray, temporarily commanding the 2/19th, was killed by a shell, the Brigade-Major seriously wounded, and Brigadier-General Watson had a very narrow escape.

The Turk knew only too well the value of the position controlling the water supply at Sheria, and struggled for its position to the last. But his position was now critical ; his left held up by the 53rd Division, his forces cut in two by our capture of Sheria ; while to crown all a crushing

defeat by General Bulfin's XXI Corps on his right had compelled the abandonment of Gaza, his second position on the Wadi Hesi, and the retreat northward of his whole right wing.

During the night of November 6th-7th instructions were received from the Corps directing the Division to be prepared to follow the Desert Mounted Corps on its march to Huj in the morning: and that for the present the Division was lent to that Corps. All units were therefore instructed to be ready to move as soon as rations were drawn and horses watered.

During the morning of the 7th the mounted troops of the Desert Mounted Corps crossed the Wadi Sheria, and the 179th Brigade received orders to act as advanced guard to the Division marching on Huj. The mounted troops, however, were unable to make progress; the Australian Mounted Division not being able to get beyond the line held by the 180th Brigade. This necessitated a slight change of plan, the 179th Brigade were ordered to occupy the high ground facing west, the 180th Brigade to concentrate behind them, and the 181st Brigade to concentrate, so far as the tactical situation permitted, in rear of the Anzac Division. All units were ordered to be prepared to move on Zuheilikah early the next morning; when the Australian Division were being directed against Juaithiny, moving from east to west.

The 179th Division, after handing over captures at Kauwukah and Rushdi to the 10th Division, fell back and bivouacked on the Samarra ridge. At 4 p.m. on the 7th it moved forward according to orders, mentioned above, to take up its position. The 2/15th on the right and the 2/14th on the left were the leading battalions, with the 2/13th and 2/16th in support. Crossing the low ground near the wadi, it came under a heavy shell fire, but pressing on it dislodged the enemy from the north bank of the wadi, after some stubborn fighting, and an outpost line was established according to plan. The night was spent

digging in, and patrols sent forward found no signs of the Turks.

Orders were received to move off at 7 a.m. on November 8th for the advance on Huj—the Australian Mounted Division to move on Jemmameh. The march to be carried out as follows: *Advance guard*: The 179th Division, Bayley's, 303rd group R.A., and one squadron of the Worcestershire Yeomanry. *Right column*: The 181st Brigade, Fergusson's group R.A., to move via Buteihah-Kofkah. *Main body*: The 180th Brigade and A Echelon Divisional Ammunition Column, to move via Zuheilikah before the Division commenced its march.

By half-past nine the 179th Brigade had carried the Zuheilikah ridge and advanced to the attack of the village of Muntaret-el-Baghl, which was reported by the Worcestershire Yeomanry to be occupied by a strong flank guard of the enemy.

Supported by the fire of its Artillery group, the Brigade prepared to attack the position. The 2/14th were on the right, the 2/15th on the left, followed respectively by the 2/16th and 2/13th.

The Turks occupied a strong position on the ridge of a long gentle slope, bare and devoid of cover; and were well dug in with an excellent zone of fire.

The Brigade was at once met with a heavy Artillery fire, the 2/15th suffering severely, but pressing on they drove the enemy from the village on to the ridge where they again attacked them; and the 2/14th working round the Turks' left flank, after a sharp encounter, the position was gained; the enemy retiring in disorder, in a northerly direction. The Brigade reorganised for their final objective—Huj.

Meanwhile the Worcestershire and Warwickshire Yeomanry had come up on the right of the Division: some Turkish batteries were still in action about 2,000 yards to the north behind a ridge; General Shea, who was present, at once ordered the Yeomanry to charge. Gallantly

led by Colonel Cheape, they charged with magnificent dash right up to the guns in the face of point-blank gunfire, machine-gun, and rapid rifle fire, sabring the gunners and capturing every gun. Continuing the charge, they took four machine guns, which they turned on the retreating Turks with great effect. After the charge the enemy made no further efforts to defend Huj, but streamed away in hopeless disorder—the only evidence of their existence being in the constant explosions heard, as ammunition dumps, supply dumps, or wells were destroyed. The Division moved into bivouac about a mile and a half east of Huj.

Between 5.30 a.m. on the 6th and 4.30 on the 8th November the Division had marched $23\frac{1}{2}$ miles, captured the defensive works of the Kauwukah and Rushdi systems, stormed the bridge-head at Sheria, driven off a determined counter-attack, and driven the enemy's rear-guard from three defensive positions.

The following testimony to the Division in the Australian official history is worth quoting : “ The Londoners of the 60th Division were hurrying forward grandly on the left, beating down a strong Turkish rear-guard in their stride. The spirit and endurance of the Division shone out, even at this time when all Allenby's army was behaving splendidly. They had now been fighting and marching hard for nine days, but their advance across broken country to Huj was distinguished by the enthusiasm and vigour of perfectly fresh troops.”

The casualties from the attack on Kauwukah to the occupation of Huj were as follows :

179th Brigade : 1 officer and 27 other ranks killed, 16 officers, 258 other ranks wounded and 2 other ranks missing.

180th Brigade : 3 officers and 47 other ranks killed, 13 officers and 236 other ranks wounded and 6 other ranks missing.

181st Brigade : 3 officers and 32 other ranks killed, 6 officers and 201 other ranks wounded and 10 other ranks missing.

Artillery : 11 other ranks killed, and 6 officers and 38 other ranks wounded.

The war material captured during the same period amounted to : 2 5·9 howitzers, 10 field guns, 21 machine guns, 2 Lewis guns, and anti-aircraft guns ; besides a large amount of gun ammunition, small arms ammunition, bombs, supplies, tents and engineer material.

CHAPTER XV

HUJ TO LATRON

DOUBLY welcome was the short rest accorded the Division at Huj—welcome not only to the fighting troops, who had been sorely tried, but to the administrative units who had been taxed to the utmost of their powers to keep the fighting units with everything necessary to their well-being and efficiency.

The R.A.M.C. especially had to work under conditions absolutely new to them, and before being ready to take the field to go through a complete reorganisation as regards equipment of the Field Ambulances to suit these new conditions, and these ten days of marching and fighting were the first test of their powers to cope with all the difficulties which beset them.

“It was almost heartbreaking,” writes Colonel Dowsett, “after all the difficulties overcome in Macedonia in training mules to the carrying of litters, to have to start all over again and set to work on camels and their lying or sitting cacolets. . . . Water was a constant source of anxiety, as the sole source was from shallow wells in the neighbouring Wadi Ghuzze, where past efforts had been made to store water by means of a dam. But contamination from both animals and men was very difficult to prevent, and constant supervision of the meagre supply was absolutely essential. The amount available was very limited, and this, combined with the difficulty of transport, mainly on the backs of camels in ‘fanatis,’ necessitated the supply being roughly one gallon per day per man for all purposes—consequently bathing and washing of clothes became an acute problem. . . . In spite of the very trying conditions of living in this desert area for three months in the height of summer, the general health of the Division remained extraordinarily good. The D.A.D.M.S., Major Fegan, however, fell ill

and was sent down, and Major Price Harris of the 2/4th Field Ambulance took his place. It was during this period that the organisation of the Field Ambulances was again altered. It was decreed that every Field Ambulance should have one of its tent sub-divisions immobile, i.e. totally devoid of transport, in other words, the only mobile medical unit was rendered partially immobile. Such an arrangement at the time seemed open to criticism, but, as events turned out, these immobile detachments were destined to play a very important and useful rôle in the scheme of evacuation. The length of evacuation became so extended that they became able to act in the same capacity as a casualty clearing station, and move as occasion arose, by transport lent from Corps Head-quarters. . . . On September 28th the three immobile tent sub-divisions of the 3rd Field Ambulance were combined into one unit under Captain F. S. Steadman, and were moved to Shellal junction, on the west bank of the Wadi Ghuzze, to form an evacuating unit during the preliminary stages of the operations. This unit was then known as the 'Field Ambulance Immobile 60th Division,' and received the early cases from the 10th, 53rd, and 74th Divisions, as well as from its own, principally the sick during the forward march eastwards. On the same day also, the two bearer sub-divisions, an advanced dressing station party of the 2/4th Field Ambulance, with all the ambulance cacolets and camels moved off with the 179th Brigade on the right flank, and the whole of the 2/5th and 2/6th Field Ambulances and the remainder of the 2/4th marched with the rest of the divisional troops in the direction of Beer-sheba. On arrival, about 1.30 a.m., in the area of concentration for the attack the 2/4th and 2/6th Field Ambulances tent divisions proceeded to form the main dressing stations side by side on the previously selected site, just east of the Wadi Mirtaba, and about 5,000 yards, as the crow flies, from the nearest Turkish trenches. At the same time, too, the 2/4th and 2/6th Field Ambulances advanced

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dressing station parties were forming their posts and disposing their bearers behind the deploying 179th and 181st Brigades respectively. The 2/5th Field Ambulance remained in reserve with the 180th Brigade. A small evacuating or relay post was established by the 2/6th Field Ambulance to act as a motor road-head at the junction of the Wadi Mirtaba with the Wadi Saba, whence cases could be evacuated by motor ambulance across country to Imara, where by this time a casualty clearing station had been established, thus freeing the Field Ambulance Immobile to come up when wanted.

“ The first casualties began to arrive at 6.15 a.m., after which a steady flow continued all day. It was intended to use the motor ambulance convoy right up to the main dressing stations for evacuations to Imara, but the first convoy of cars did not arrive till 4 p.m., and reported that the last part of the journey, namely, the three or four miles along the Wadi Mirtaba, was so cut up with limber traffic that it was practically impossible for cars. They were, therefore, but lightly loaded, and told not to return ; they got back with considerable difficulty. . . . In the meantime, however, at about 1.30 p.m., the 2/4th and 2/6th Field Ambulances were instructed to assist them with twelve sand-carts. By 10 p.m. 395 casualties had been admitted at the main dressing station, of which over 200 had been evacuated by that time to the motor road-head. About 9 p.m. the 179th and 181st Brigades were preparing to move forward, so the 2/4th and 2/6th Field Ambulances were ordered to send one complete section forward with these brigades respectively ; and as most of the transport was still required for the main dressing station, six motor ambulances were ordered to come straight to Beersheba, by the Wadi Saba, to carry on with the advanced sections in the morning. The next morning, November 2nd, the 2/4th and 2/6th Field Ambulances were ordered to close down their main dressing stations, as soon as clear, and move into their respective

brigade areas preparatory to further fighting. . . . By this time the whole of the convoy of twenty-one motor ambulances had arrived in Beersheba, ready for evacuating direct from the Field Ambulances as required. During the day a German aeroplane suddenly appeared, and, swooping down within a few yards of the hospital roof, fired with its machine gun point-blank at all and sundry, but by extraordinary luck no one was hit.

"During November 3rd thirty-nine more cases were admitted, several of which were wounded by treading on or meddling with Turkish bombs, with which the whole district was profusely littered. In the attack on the Kauwukah defences the 2/4th Field Ambulance collected on the left and the 2/5th on the right. As the Division was likely to follow through to Sheria, and perhaps beyond, this became open warfare, and main dressing stations were liable to move forward at any moment. For this, therefore, arrangements had to be made for continuing the evacuation of sick and wounded by relay posts and motor rail-heads to keep the Field Ambulances mobile. This could only be done by depleting one or other of the Field Ambulances of personnel and equipment to form these posts: this was rendered more difficult by the fact of the Division being made entirely responsible for its own evacuations for the whole route as far as Imara. A motor road-head was established at Irgeig, on the Gaza-Beersheba road, on the morning of November 6th in readiness for all eventualities, to which all Field Ambulances had to evacuate their cases by their own camels or sand-carts; and from which they were evacuated to Imara across what proved to be a terrible country by motor ambulance. As it happened the first motor convoy broke down and evacuations were held up at Irgeig, and by the late evening a complete section, with sand-carts, of the 2/4th Field Ambulance had to be sent back to Irgeig to take over the post, give shelter to and deal with the many casualties there, till a new route could be found for the

motor ambulances. During the day main dressing stations were moved forward as the Division advanced to the wadi Sheria, where considerable opposition was encountered, and the Division was obliged to remain south of the wadi for the night. During the whole of November 7th there was fighting about the Wadi Sheria, and the 2/5th and 2/6th Field Ambulances had advanced dressing stations just on the south bank of the wadi, and a very hectic night was spent by both. Wounded continued to arrive, and all day and all night the wadi was continually shelled. The 2/5th Field Ambulance was practically under fire for the whole time, but it was impossible to move, and one shell fell right in their midst. When the Division advanced across the wadi next day it was important that the Field Ambulances should be as complete as possible; so one tent sub-division of the 2/6th Field Ambulance, with ten sand-carts, was left on the Wadi Sheria to act as relay post, and all cases from the other dressing stations were transferred to this post, thus freeing the main bulk of the Field Ambulances to move forward with their respective brigades. Urgent representations were made to the Corps for more transport to clear the post on the Wadi Sheria, but none was immediately available. The post at Sheria was therefore very hard pressed for carrying out its arduous task, and much credit is due to the personnel for this excellent work. During the attack across the wadi, on the 7th, very gallant work was done by the bearer division of the 2/6th Field Ambulance. On the 8th the whole Division moved north. The Field Ambulances were forming advanced dressing stations all day and keeping on the move, still continuing to evacuate to Sheria. By the evening all the Field Ambulances were concentrated with their Brigades in the neighbourhood of Huj."

Not less arduous was the work of the Divisional Train. On their arrival in Egypt considerable reorganisation was necessary, and the art of loading camels had to be acquired. On September 16th the Divisional dump was formed at

the newly completed rail-head at Shellal; where it remained until after the capture of Sheria. Some notes by Captain Rogers, the supply officer of the 179th Brigade, throw a little light on the trials connected with feeding an army in a desert area.

“ For a week the Brigade was at El Esani, forming a screen for the engineers who were developing the water supply. On the night of the 28th we moved to Abu Ghalyun, and forty-eight hours later the Brigade took up its position in the Wadi Mirtaba for the attack on Beersheba. At Abu Ghalyun an entirely new system of rations came into force—‘ the mobile scale.’ This was supplemented on the night of the attack by a private venture on the part of the Brigade; soda-water bottles and ‘ Tommy’s cookers,’ having been obtained from Cairo, were issued to all men; they were to be filled with tea and the rum issue, and to be heated up before dawn, at which hour the attack was to be made. The baggage and supply waggons left Abu Ghalyun about 6 p.m. on October 30th, in order to strike the Khalasa track and join rear Brigade Head-quarters, just south of the Wadi Mirtaba. Owing to the heavy sand our progress was extremely slow, and it was necessary to take out the leading pairs of two waggons in order to get the third through the worst places. When we did eventually arrive at the rendezvous the guide detailed to meet us had evidently given us up for lost, and so we went on till we found ourselves in a large wadi; the transport officer halted here, and I set off up the wadi to try to discover our bearings. After about half an hour I arrived at Brigade Head-quarters, found the Staff Captain, whose advice was, ‘ Get away as quickly as possible.’ I returned to the waggons, and we turned about and retraced our footsteps. Just as we reached the top of the wadi dawn broke, and the attack commenced. It was a near thing, thanks to the sand of the desert. The following day we again crossed the Wadi Mirtaba about daybreak, and the brigade dump that day was on the spot where the Civil

Service Rifles had fought on the previous morning. On the evening of November 3rd we passed through Beersheba, and on the following evening found ourselves in the Wadi Irgeig. Here we had our first experiences, not altogether enjoyable, of locating the divisional dump in the dark, on a compass bearing; our return to camp was even less successful. Following this came the attack on Sheria, where rations were issued at dawn whilst shells from the retreating Turks were constantly flying over, and sometimes all too near, our morning's work."

Lord Allenby, in his despatch, writes: "By the 9th, therefore, operations had reached a stage of a direct pursuit by as many troops as could be supplied so far in advance of the rail-head. The problem, in fact, became one of supply rather than manœuvre. The question of water and forage was a very difficult one, and even where water was found in sufficient quantities it was usually in wells and not on the surface; consequently if the machinery for working the wells was damaged, or a sufficient supply of troughs not available, the process of watering a large quantity of animals was slow and difficult."

These water difficulties, and, in a measure, the supply question, made it impossible for the XX Corps to pursue the enemy north of Huj. The pursuit was therefore taken up by General Bulfin's XXI Corps on the coast, and the Desert Mounted Corps; the XX Corps being ordered back to Karm, where it could be easily fed from rail-head with very little transport, and all the transport borrowed from the XXI Corps before the attack on Beersheba rejoined that Corps, as well as all the transport that could be spared from the XX.

On November 11th the 180th Brigade was moved to Wadi Jemmameh, and on the following day to Wadi Hesi. The Commander-in-Chief's plan for the next phase was to drive a wedge between the two Turkish armies, and straddle the Nablus-Jerusalem road, about fifteen miles north of Jerusalem, with the Yeomanry Mounted Division. The

52nd and 75th Divisions were to advance on the Holy City by the Jerusalem-Jaffa road, and the 53rd Division, with the Corps Cavalry, to push along up the Hebron-Jerusalem road. The 54th Division and the Desert Mounted Corps were ordered to operate in the coastal sector with the Anzac Mounted Division. On the 16th the General received news from the Corps Head-quarters that the Division had been specially selected to move up to Junction Station, and thence to strike north of Jerusalem. The Division consequently moved down and concentrated near Sheria, where the first letters and parcels were received since leaving the Wadi Ghuzze.

On the 17th General Shea received the following letter from the Commander-in-Chief : " The fighting and marching of your Division has been beyond praise. The Turk has been out-manceuvred and out-fought, and Von Kress's army is now beaten and demoralised."

On the 19th the Division moved through Gaza and bivouacked about a mile and a half to the east of the town. All round Ali Muntar, where the Division bivouacked, great stacks of ammunition, gas cylinders, and the huge craters made by the shells from our naval guns, together with damaged railway line, rolling stock, and broken bridges, in fact debris of every description, bore witness to the complete rout and hasty flight of the Turks.

A new trial now faced the Army, the autumn rains commenced, and as the Division marched into its bivouacs, a drenching rain fell, accompanied by a decided fall in the temperature ; a distinctly unpleasant change as the troops were still in summer clothing. It had, moreover, as things progressed, the effect of enhancing the difficulties already existing in the transport of supplies : the rain made the tracks so slippery as to become impossible for camels. However, later on two thousand donkeys were sent up, which made an excellent substitute.

The next day the Division began its march north to Junction Station via Medjel and Kustineh. The country

traversed was, for the most part, of a loamy nature, quite good going in fine weather, but impossible for mechanical transport, except for very light cars, and in places hopeless for them, under the influence of the rain. Plenty of villages were passed where such things as eggs and oranges could be obtained, especially the latter. The history of the 2/19th avers that : " So many oranges were eaten on that march that, later on, drafts marching up from Gaza were known to have followed the trail of orange-peel, and thus found their way across Palestine to Jerusalem."

On the 20th the Division bivouacked at Medjel, and on the 21st two miles south-east of Kustineh ; and on the following day reached Junction Station, after a march of forty-two miles. Here the Division was placed under the orders of the XXI Corps, from whom instructions were received to move the next day to Latron—where it went into bivouacs by brigade groups on a line from that place to Bab-el-Wad, the entrance to the mountain road to Jerusalem, twenty miles to the eastward.

Meanwhile General Bulfin had given the Turk no rest, his pursuit had been relentless. The Turks made one or two efforts to resist : on the 13th they attempted a stand on the Katrah-El Mughar line, but were driven out by the 52nd Division and the Australian Mounted Troops ; on the 14th Junction Station was captured, and the mounted troops on the following day occupied Ramleh and Ludd ; and on the 16th Jaffa was occupied without opposition. Enab was captured with the bayonet on the 20th, and on the following day Nebi Samwil was secured and held in the face of two vigorous counter-attacks.

CHAPTER XVI

NEBI SAMWIL

THE Division was now once more in the fighting line, with the prospect before them of fighting as heavy, or even heavier, than they had already encountered ; and undoubtedly under conditions both of climate and terrain which proved most difficult and trying, out of which, as we shall see, they came, as usual, completely triumphant. The desert sands were left behind, and the Judean hills lay before them. Rising to a height of something like 3,000 feet, the hills are everywhere broken by deep valleys, and rocky ravines lined with deep shingly beds, washed down by the mountain torrents, from which the hill slopes rise in steep gradients, often made steeper by terraces built up for purposes of cultivation. A more difficult country to fight over it would be hard to imagine ; dead ground gained in front of an objective was sure to be under enfilade from half a dozen other hills, and to make headway it was essential to clear all the hills on the line of advance.

Transport difficulties were greater than ever ; the heavy continuous rain made every track well-nigh impassable, while the camels died by hundreds from the cold and exposure ; wheeled transport was impossible beyond Enab, by reason of the roughness of the road and the steepness of the gradients. Ancient tracks and roads had been allowed to go to ruin, and in places were passable only in single file—rough tracks they were, in fact, covered with loose boulders and winding in and out of the hills. It is hardly exaggeration to say that no gun could be brought up until a road was made for it.

The general position reached on the evening of November 21st proved that it was impossible to carry out the original plan of gaining the Nablus-Jerusalem road.

The Mounted Yeomanry Division, who had done wonders, and suffered heavily, were fiercely counter-attacked by the Turks, whose resistance had stiffened with a view to holding the position in front of Jerusalem, and after bitter fighting were compelled to fall back on Beit ur El Foka. Attacks made on the 23rd and 24th, to the west of the road held by the enemy, failed, as he could support his Infantry with guns in position on the high road ; whereas our guns, from lack of roads, could not be brought up to support our Infantry. In face of the necessity for further preparation and organisation, orders were issued to consolidate the ground gained and prepare for relief.

On the 24th the Division moved up to Enab, where they received a hearty welcome from the monks at the monastery. Captain Docwra Rogers avers that : " Quite a welcome awaited us at Enab. The Father Superior of the monastery even went so far as to state that he wished to give every British soldier a glass of their famous wine ; certainly it was good, if somewhat heavy." Their kindness was certainly unbounded, and showed itself in many ways, but in none more than putting the greater part of their monastery and their church at our disposal as a hospital.

On the 25th the Division relieved the 75th and 52nd Divisions in the line, holding the line Soba-Nebi Samwil-Beit Izza. The 180th Brigade taking over the Nebi Samwil section.

The important position of Nebi Samwil, a ridge running for nearly a mile north-west to south-east, was the scene of some desperate fighting. The ridge, with a general height of some 2,800 feet, commands Jerusalem and all the broken mountain range stretching away to Nablus. It reaches the highest point, about 3,000 feet, to the west, where there is a village with stone-walled gardens and orchards, surrounding a mosque with a long slender minaret, a landmark for miles around. North-east of the mosque the ridge for about 1,200 yards is broad and flat,

and then falls abruptly towards a wadi south of Ber Nebala. The western slopes are not so steep, but are swept by fire from El Jib.

Clear of the village enclosures, the ground to the east falls to the Wadi Hanna, and to the west in a series of rock terraces it slopes to the Roman road. It was first captured on November 21st by a Ghurka battalion of the 75th Division. Three fierce counter-attacks were made by the Turks on the following day, but the Ghurkas held fast. They were relieved by a battalion of the 52nd Division, who in their turn were heavily counter-attacked by the Turks, but held on. The summit of the crest changed hands more than once ; but the mosque remained in our hands, though the surrounding houses were in possession of the Turks.

On the 25th the 2/17th and 2/19th Battalions moved up from their bivouacs near Latron and relieved the two battalions of the 75th Division in the Nebi Samwil sector. The 2/17th were on the right, the 2/19th on the left. Both were in position on the morning of the 26th ; on the right front the enemy's trenches were distant not more than 200 yards ; on the left in some places about 30 yards. The ruined houses in the village gave the enemy cover from view and supplied posts for the snipers. The 2/20th Battalion was in support at Buddu. At midday on the 27th the XX Corps, with the exception of the 53rd Division, still on the Hebron road, having come up, the Division again came under their own Corps Commander, Sir Philip Chetwode.

Biddu and Beit Surik, held by the 2/18th, were shelled on the 26th and suffered a few casualties. Beit Surik was heavily attacked, and a company of the 2/20th, sent in support, relieved the situation by a rapid counter-attack with the bayonet.

On the 27th a message was received from General Bulfin by General Shea, thanking the Division for their co-operation while under his command.

On the same day the enemy were very active, and in addition to the endeavour of a party, some two hundred strong, to work round the left of the 179th Brigade, a most determined attack was made on Nebi Samwil. A heavy bombardment of the hill commenced about 1 p.m., and about 3 p.m. the fire concentrated on the mosque, increasing in intensity till by 4.30 p.m., the mosque was reduced to a heap of ruins, and the platoon holding it had a most trying experience. When the barrage lifted on to the support line and the Infantry attack commenced, directed mainly on a position north of the mosque, and persistently pushed home till 7 p.m. The enemy at times got within fifty yards of our line ; but were everywhere repulsed, suffering severely from the fire of our Stokes mortars. Two companies of the 2/20th were hurried up in support, but as the attack had been repulsed and there were no signs of a second assault, they returned to Biddu about midnight.

Our casualties numbered seventy-nine, mostly in the companies commanded by Captains Eames and Ward respectively, which bore the brunt of the fighting.

During the attack the enemy had searched all approaches to Wadi Samwil and the surrounding wadis with Artillery, machine-gun fire, and gas. Bombardment re-opened next morning, but some guns having been got up to reply, it soon ceased.

At 2.30 a.m. on the 27th the extreme left post of the 179th Brigade, held by the 2/16th, was fired on by the enemy post on hills to the left between them and the extreme right of the 180th Brigade. The Turks advanced down the hills in a southerly direction towards our left picquet company. The commander at once ordered up his reserve platoon, the enemy was then on the neck between the two hills. The platoon charged and drove the Turks over the neck and off the hill from which he had first fired. The enemy clung to the wadis in front, and

the officer commanding the 2/16th sent two platoons of the left support company against them, but they retired before the attack developed. Our casualties were three other ranks killed and one officer and five other ranks wounded.

On the night of the 28th the 2/20th relieved the 2/19th. Three companies held the mosque and the summit of the hill, with one company in close support. Heavy shelling began about 9 a.m. on the 30th, which caused some of the walls and the remainder of the mosque to fall in about 1.30 p.m., when the enemy commenced a determined assault on the position. In describing this attack, the last and fiercest the enemy made, we cannot do better than quote Colonel Warde-Aldam's own words :

“ At 8.30 a.m. on the 29th the enemy began shelling the mosque, intermittently, with 5·9 guns from three directions. This continued till 1.30 p.m., when the fire became intensive. They also shelled the ravine east of Nebi Samwil to prevent reinforcements coming up. Then the centre company reported that the enemy was massing to attack from the north. They attacked strongly at 1.45, and after a sharp fight were driven off by Lewis-gun fire and bombs. Immediately after, a second attack was made from the north-east, and repulsed as before. At the same time another body attacked the mosque from the south-east. Owing to the nature of the ground, they were able to creep up to within a few yards of the post they tried to rush. The attack failed with heavy loss, owing to our resistance. The right company lost 40 per cent. ; it was completely isolated, except that the two runners carried messages throughout the bombardment. Shelling continued, slowly decreasing, until 4.30 p.m., when it ceased. Our Artillery rendered valuable assistance during the attack. We had nine killed and forty wounded ; nearly all caused by shell fire.”

C Company suffered most severely, one post, under Lance-Corporal Doughty, was completely wiped out, and a platoon of sixteen had only two survivors.

General Watson, in his report to the Division, said : " The steadiness and cheerfulness of all ranks was beyond praise."

The desperate nature of the enemy's attacks to recover Nebi Samwil is shown by the fact that, later on, we found more than five hundred dead Turks on the slopes of the hill. After this last attempt the Turks had no inclination to renew the attack, and we were left in peaceful possession of the ridge ; and on the 30th the 2/22nd, under Colonel Borton, relieved the 2/20th.

At a Corps conference held in Yalo on the same day, it was decided, on account of bad roads and water shortage, to attack the Turkish position covering Jerusalem from the west and south-west, instead of from the north-west, as had been intended, after it was found impossible to isolate Jerusalem by breaking into the Nablus road at Bireh.

Desultory fighting still continued on the left of the Division, and continued until December 3rd, when, after desperate fighting, the Devon Yeomanry Battalion of the 74th Division were compelled, after losses amounting to nearly half their strength, to abandon the village of Foka.

Before the new plans for the attack on Jerusalem, which were now in the hands of the XX Corps, could be put into operation, at least a week's work was essential on roads and communications to enable guns, ammunition, and supplies to be brought up. The main road from Latron to Jerusalem was the only highway available, and its surface was in a terrible condition. Pioneer battalions and large parties of the Egyptian Labour Corps worked incessantly ; the highway was made more passable, and new roads were made between Latron and Beit Likia, and

between Enab and Kubeibah ; and in less than a week, though the roads were still in the rough, sufficient progress had been made to ease the situation and enable the Corps Commander to perfect his plans for the capture of Jerusalem.

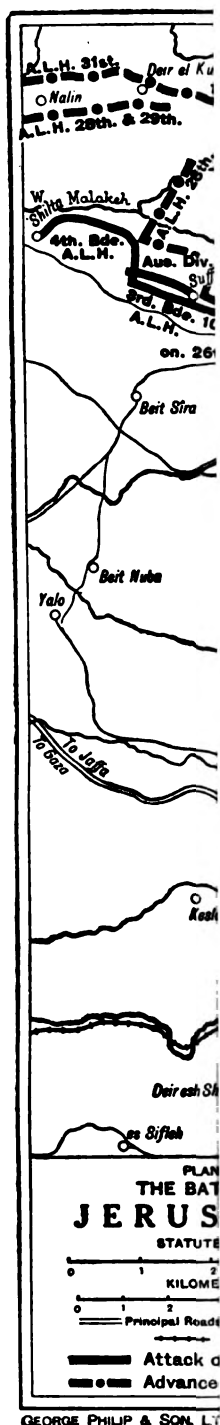
CHAPTER XVII

JERUSALEM

THE concentration for the great attack, which was to result in the fall of Jerusalem, began on December 4th. Two brigades of the 53rd Division, which was advancing up the Beersheba-Hebron road, began their march north, reaching the Balbeh area on the 6th, and gaining touch with the 10th Australian Light Horse occupying El Khudr. And on the night of the 5th-6th the 231st Brigade (74th Division) relieved the 60th Division in the Beit Izza and Nebi Samwi' positions.

The enemy, who numbered six Infantry divisions occupied a position covering Bethlehem on their left, running north, to the westward of Ain Kerim, along the formidable ridge west of the steep and formidable Wadi Surar, a magnificent natural obstacle which the attackers must cross. The ridge itself was crowned with a careful and well-dug system of trenches and formidable works, of which the Heart and Liver redoubts were prominent. Their whole line of works which, continuing to the east of Nebi Samwil and west of El Jib, and thence in a westerly direction to near Suffa, had been sited with care, and dug even before our advance on Beersheba. The only weak point in the whole system, which had been carefully arranged so that all dead ground in front of one spur was swept with cross-fire from another, was the absence of support trenches behind the crest. Presumably the Turk considered his position impregnable and risked all on a single line. This lack of depth was his undoing.

Sir Philip Chetwode's plan was to compel the Turks to evacuate Jerusalem by completely encircling it; and then, in deference to the wishes of the Commander-in-Chief, to avoid any fighting in or about the city itself.



To accomplish this, the 60th and 74th Divisions were to attack in an easterly direction, on the front Ain Kerim-Beit Surik. Their objectives gained, the two Divisions were to wheel to the left, pivoting on Nebi Samwil and gain a position astride the Jerusalem-Nablus road. The two brigades of the 53rd Division, advancing meanwhile from Hebron, were to protect the right of the 60th Division, and, seizing a line covering the Jericho road, envelop the eastern and north-eastern outskirts of the city. Connection between the Division and the 53rd to be kept up by the 10th Australian Light Horse.

The attack was fixed for December 8th, and on the night of the 7th the Division moved into its concentration areas as follows :

The 179th Infantry Brigade on the right, with two mountain batteries, a section of the 521st Field Company R.E., one company of Pioneers, and a detachment of the 2/4th Field Ambulance to cross the Wadi Surar and seize the high ground south of Ain Kerim. The 180th Infantry Brigade, with the 519th Field Company R.E., two platoons of Pioneers and the 2/5th Field Ambulance to a position of deployment where the Deir Yesin spur and the high ground east of Kulonieh could be assaulted at dawn.

The 180th Infantry Brigade, the 522nd Field Company R.E., and the 2/6th Field Ambulance in reserve.

In the event of the 53rd Division being held up in its advance at Sherafat or Malhah, one battalion of the Brigade to be placed under the orders of the Brigade Commander 179th Brigade.

The spell of fine weather which had been invaluable during the work of preparation for the attack, broke on the 7th, and rain fell unceasingly throughout the day and the greater part of the night. The roads became a mass of slippery mud, which rendered the movement of transport almost impossible.

The troops moving to their positions were drenched to the skin, and being without a stick to shelter them in

their bivouacs, rest and sleep were out of the question. The state of the weather, coupled with the slow progress of the 53rd Division, which was much hampered by supply and other difficulties, compelled a consideration of the advisability of the attack being carried out; but Sir Philip Chetwode decided that, under the circumstances, it must go forward, with or without the 53rd Division.

Cold, wet, and sleepless, the men spent a truly wretched night; but nothing could damp their enthusiasm, and the spirit to overcome all difficulties, which had always characterised the division, shone out more brilliantly than ever in the attack on the Jerusalem defences.

The attack was divided into four phases as follows:

(1) The 60th Division to capture, as soon after dawn as possible, the enemy works from the railway to the main Enab road; while the 74th Division captured the works north of Beit Ikse.

(2) The 53rd and 60th Divisions to advance to a general line Jerusalem-Lifta.

(3) The 60th and 74th Divisions to advance to the general line of the track running out of the main road, one mile north of Jerusalem; if possible the right of the 60th to be assisted by the left of the 53rd Division.

(4) The 60th Division to advance to the line astride the Jerusalem-Nablus road, about Shafat to Ras-el-Sawil, while the 74th Division throws its right into Beit Hannina.

The orders for the method of attack ran as follows:

“At dawn (zero hour and Z day will be communicated later):—

The two attacking brigades will capture the first objective.

At the same hour, 74th Division will assault the Beit Ikse trenches.

Pauses will be made at each objective to enable the Infantry to reorganise. Except for these pauses the advance to the final objective will be as rapid as possible.

The 179th Infantry Brigade will be the directing brigade throughout the operation.

During the advance to the third objective, the left brigade of the 53rd Division, if it has room to act, will assist the right of the 60th Division. If it has not it will go into reserve west of JERUSALEM, and will only be employed on the direct request of the B.G.C. 179th Infantry Brigade for support, should the latter require help in gaining his final objective.

In the event of the 53rd Division being held up in its advance on Sherafat or Malhah, one battalion of the Reserve Brigade will be placed under the orders of B.G.C. 179th Brigade to protect the right flank.

Artillery.

The Artillery plan will be issued separately.

The Artillery (except Mountain) will be under Divisional control at the commencement of the operation. Later, as soon as it is possible for batteries to get forward, after the second objective has been taken, a group will come under the orders of the B.G.C. each attacking brigade.

Mounted Troops.

One Squadron, 10th Australian Light Horse, now at EL RAS, will march to EL KUDR, so as to reach there one hour before dawn on Z day. This squadron will gain touch with the 53rd Division advancing along the HEBRON road, and keep touch between the two Divisions during the operation.

10th Australian Light Horse (less one squadron) will come under the orders of the XX Corps.

Priority on the JERUSALEM road will be given to Artillery and ammunition in that order."

The 179th Brigade, on the right, made its approach march in two columns. The right column under Lieutenant-Colonel Ogilby of the London Scottish, consisted of that battalion with the Kensingtons, the Civil Service Rifles, and a company of the Pioneer Battalion of the 2/12th Loyal North Lancashire Regiment together with the 521st Company R.E.

The left column consisted of the Queen's Westminsters and B/9th Mountain Battery, and was under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel Gordon Clark, D.S.O.

The route had been carefully reconnoitred by Captain Kisch and other officers of the 2/13th.

Parties of Pioneers and R.E. were dropped at intervals to improve the track and ensure that the troops following took the right route.

The 2/23rd Regiment, attached to the Brigade, was ordered to follow the right column.

The Kensingtons, who formed the advanced guard, pushed forward two companies to seize the heights south of Ain Kerim.

About a thousand yards south-west of Ain Kerim was a square stone tower, known to us as the "Watch Tower." This point was fixed by the Scottish as their assembly point before the assault.

The advanced guard moved off about 7 p.m.; and at 8.30 the Scottish began to descend the Surah Wadi. The rain still poured down, it was pitchy dark and the going extremely difficult; and as the Kensingtons approached the enemy's position, the Turks, who were thoroughly on the alert, greeted them with heavy machine-gun fire. They pressed on, however, and after considerable confused fighting in the darkness, reached Ain Kerim village, but failed to capture either Surah or Tumulus hills. Things went slowly, it was long past the hour when the Scottish

had hoped to gain the Watch Tower ; so Colonel Ogilby determined to press forward at once and drive a wedge into the enemy's centre. At about 5.15 the Scottish prepared to advance, supported by the Civil Service Rifles ; but first it was necessary to take Tumulus Hill. Meanwhile the Queen's Westminsters had cleared the Turks out of Ain Karim, and were preparing to attack Khurbet Subr.

The Scottish came under heavy fire about dawn ; but made steady progress, two companies nearly reaching the summit of Tumulus Hill, when they were checked by heavy machine-gun fire at short range. Preparations were being made to send a company to take the hill in flank, when a man of the Regiment was seen on the hill waving his helmet ; this was Corporal Train, who, acting on his own initiative, had crawled to a flank, and creeping behind an enemy sangar, had attacked and captured the gun single-handed. For this he was awarded the Victoria Cross ; the official report in the *Gazette* runs : " No. 510051 Corporal Charles William Train, London Regiment. For most conspicuous bravery, dash, and initiative displayed under heavy fire when his company was unexpectedly engaged at close range by a party of the enemy with two machine guns, and brought to a standstill. Corporal Train on his own initiative rushed forward and engaged the enemy with rifle grenades and succeeded in putting some of the team out of action. He then shot at and wounded an officer in command, and with bomb and rifle killed and wounded the remainder of the team. After this he went to the assistance of a comrade who was bombing the enemy from the front, and shot at and killed one of the enemy who was carrying the gun out of action. His courage and devotion to duty undoubtedly saved his Battalion heavy casualties and enabled them to advance to their objective at a time when the situation seemed critical."

The summit of Tumulus Hill gained, it was possible to bring an enfilade fire to bear on the enemy's trenches,

and the Kensingtons having at last got through, the first objective was speedily gained. By this time the Queen's Westminsters had cleared the Ain Kerim heights, and pushing on gained their objective on the Khurbet Subr ridge. Here they were shelled from an enemy battery firing from a hollow near the Ain Kerim-Jerusalem road. A company was pushed forward to engage it. Lance-Corporal Whines got along quickly, and engaging the battery with a Lewis gun knocked out two of the gun teams. At the same time Rifleman Smith bombed another team, killing all but one man; his rifle smashed and his bombs exhausted he rushed in and, seizing the one remaining Turk, succeeded after a struggle in breaking his neck. Only one gun escaped, and to these two men the credit of the capture of the battery must be attributed.

The Battalion was heavily counter-attacked on both flanks until the Scottish got up; and the two Battalions came into line with the 2/15th in close support. The 2/23rd relieving the Kensingtons, who went into reserve behind the right of the Brigade.

The advance was checked for some time, as the 180th Brigade had not yet captured the whole of the Deir Yesin trenches, also to give time to the mountain guns to get into position, until the result of a further attack was known.

The 180th Brigade moved into its position of deployment over the Kustal ridge about midnight of December 7th-8th. No opposition was encountered, except for a Turkish post in Kalonieh, which was "silently dealt with." The march was arduous and difficult, especially the track down into the Wadi Surah, a steep descent of over 1,000 feet, down terraced slopes, steep and stony and up the other side, in a thick ground mist that destroyed all visibility. In spite of all difficulties, the Brigade was in its appointed positions by 5.15 a.m., the hour appointed—the 2/19th on the right, the 2/17th in the centre, and 2/18th on the left, with the 2/20th in brigade reserve.

At the appointed hour the three attacking battalions advanced with great dash and enthusiasm in spite of the extremely difficult going. In half an hour the 2/18th on the left had carried the Liver Redoubt, capturing a machine gun and seven men, and by six o'clock had also carried the Heart Redoubt. About 9.30 a.m. a body of the enemy about two hundred strong, with baggage mules, was seen retiring down the wadi from Beit Ikse. The 2/18th opened Lewis-gun fire from the Heart Redoubt and surprised the Turks, who mostly bolted; the remainder resisted for a time and then hoisted the white flag: five officers and fifty other ranks were taken prisoners.

The 2/17th, advancing through the mist, surprised the garrison of a Turkish work, taking three machine guns and a quantity of small-arms ammunition and bombs, and pushing on had taken their first objective by half-past six; but, owing to the 2/19th being held up by machine-gun fire, the right flank of the battalion was exposed to a severe counter-attack, which was, however, successfully beaten off.

The 2/19th on the right, delayed by the nature of the ground, had hard fighting to gain the right-hand hill; and that carried, fought their way on into Deir Yesin village, assisted by enfilade fire from the 2/17th and 2/18th. They then fought their way on through scattered buildings till held up by snipers and machine-gun fire on the ridge in front. The snipers were soon cleared off the houses and sangars, but the quarries in front and flank were too strongly held and they could get no further.

One company of the 2/20th was ordered up to extend the flank of the 2/19th, and preparations made for a further assault. A frontal attack was to be made by $3\frac{1}{2}$ companies of the 2/19th with two companies of the 2/17th; $1\frac{1}{2}$ companies of the 2/18th working round the left flank and the company of the 2/20th round the right flank.

The Brigade Commander went forward personally to organise the attack, which was launched at 3.45 under cover of fire from the 2/18th, the 2/20th, and the 180th

Machine-gun Company and one section of Howitzers. In spite of a very heavy rifle, machine-gun, and shrapnel fire, the position was carried at the point of the bayonet, under the eyes of the Corps and Divisional Commanders, who signified their high approbation. The enemy retired hastily towards Jerusalem.

The Brigade was severely handicapped by the absence of adequate Artillery support, owing to the difficulties in the way of bringing up the guns. The roads were practically impassable, going down from Kustal by a series of zigzags in full view of the enemy. However, the 301st and 302nd Batteries got their guns through and came into action between Deir Yesin and the Heart Redoubt, within close-range rifle fire of the enemy.

Sir Philip Chetwode went, during the afternoon, to the Head-quarters of the 60th Division. He was faced with the difficulty of moving Artillery over the sodden ground and the fact that the troops were exhausted after marching and fighting in the rain since midnight; also that the 53rd Division had not yet got into position to cover the flank of the 60th Division. All further movement was cancelled and the troops ordered to consolidate the positions they had gained and postpone further advance till next day.

The 181st Brigade was ordered to be in readiness to pass through the 179th, and resume the attack, when ordered, on the right of the 180th Brigade.

The 74th Division had taken the whole of their objectives early in the morning, and subsequently carried the Beit Iksa defences, but failed to carry the El Burj ridge, south-east of Nebi Samwil.

The general position when the advance was stopped was much as follows: The 53rd Division was astride the Jerusalem-Hebron road about two miles south of Bethlehem with the 10th Australian Light Horse at Malhah. The right of the 179th Brigade rested on Malhah with a flank formed to the east by the Kensingtons; the Queen's Westminsters and London Scottish in front with Civil

Service Rifles in support behind the Scottish. The 180th Brigade continued the line, which ran about one mile east of the original Turkish position as far as Lifta, with the 181st Brigade in divisional reserve. The 74th Division held a line running due north and south, on the left of the 180th Division, through Beit Iksa to Nebi Samwil.

But for the terrible weather encountered there is little doubt that the whole of the objectives planned would have been carried. Frequent patrols sent out during the night encountered nothing beyond some desultory sniping ; and a patrol of the 2/19th sent out at dawn found no signs of the enemy on their front.

The rain ceased in the early hours of the night and the sun shone when orders to advance were received at 9 a.m. ; the enemy having taken up a strong position north and north-east of the city.

At about a quarter-past ten the 180th Brigade moved off ; the 2/20th, which had passed through the 2/19th, starting a little earlier. Little resistance was offered, and by 1.30 Shafat was occupied by a company of the 2/20th, which with another company of the same Battalion occupied Tel-el-Ful, half an hour later, where touch was gained with the 74th Division. About this time machine-gun fire was opened on Shafat, on the 2/20th, and on the flank of the 2/17th. This was dealt with by one and a half companies of the 2/20th and two guns of the 180th Machine Gun Company working round the enemy's flank, while the 2/17th charged frontally with the bayonet.

At 5 a.m. the 181st Brigade left their bivouac and moved to the north-west of Ain Kerim, along a difficult and heavy track, to their point of rendezvous in rear of the 179th Division. At 10.45 the Brigade was ordered to advance via Lifta round towards the Shafat road, the advance guard pushing north towards the Lifta-Jerusalem road had some difficulty in debouching through the suburbs north of Jerusalem, and at 1.45, while clearing the network of narrow streets, came under a heavy fire from the ridge

east of the Jerusalem-Shafat road, the south end of the ridge being apparently strongly held. The 2/21st were ordered to attack the south end and the 2/24th the north end, supported by two batteries of Colonel Bayley's Artillery group. At 4 p.m. the ridge was cleared by the two battalions at the point of the bayonet. Seventy dead Turks were subsequently counted on the ridge.

The 2/22nd were then ordered to extend from the left of the 2/24th and gain touch with the 180th Brigade.

The 2/23rd, which had rejoined the Brigade at Ain Kerim, remained in reserve west of the Jerusalem-Shafat road. The 179th Brigade moved off about midday, the Scottish leading, and marching down the Jaffa road entered the suburbs of Jerusalem, where they went into billets. The Division established itself that night on a line from a point about 1,000 yards north of Jerusalem and east of the Nablus road, through Ras Meshari to Tel-el-Ful, and westwards to the wadi south of Beit Hannina.

Thus were the whole of the Turkish positions round Jerusalem gained, in the face of hopeless climatic conditions and, in consequence, almost without Artillery support. This, with the enemy numerically equal, if not superior, and in a strong position, should have been a text-book impossibility, nevertheless it was done, and the Division took a leading part in doing it.

The casualties during the two days' fighting in the Division amounted to 8 officers and 98 other ranks killed, 24 officers and 420 other ranks wounded and 3 other ranks missing. Besides a large amount of war material we captured 28 officers and 286 other ranks, 4 guns and 17 machine guns. In addition over 1,000 wounded Turks were taken in Jerusalem.

CHAPTER XVIII

SURRENDER OF JERUSALEM

WHILE the operations recorded in the previous chapter were being carried out, the city of Jerusalem was already in our hands.

As early as the morning of the 8th large numbers of the inhabitants had been warned to be ready to leave the city at once ; and when in the afternoon the British were reported to have passed Lifta, a panic fell upon the Turks who fled in large numbers. Soon after midnight Izzet Bey, the military Governor, went to the post office, discharged the staff, himself smashed all the instruments, and finally departed in a cart "borrowed" from Mr. Vester, an American resident in the city.

At 2 a.m. what remained of the Turkish Army began to stream out of the gates, and by 7 a.m. no organised body of the enemy remained in the city.

The first intimation of a desire to surrender the city seems to have been obtained by two mess cooks of the 2/20th Battalion, Privates Andrews and Church. They had left Rear Head-quarters the night before with dixies of cocoa, and losing the way had wandered about in search of water till they found themselves at 5 a.m. near the gates of Jerusalem. Here they met a crowd of civilians with a white flag, who told them that the authorities were anxious to surrender the city. Not knowing quite what to do they turned and fled, finally reaching their battalion head-quarters.

Shortly before 8 a.m. Sergeant Hurcomb and Sergeant Sedgewick of the 2/19th Battalion met the flag of truce, and about an hour later Major Barry and Major Beck met and conversed with the Mayor and the party with the flag of truce. What happened is given in Major Barry's own words :

" On December 8, 1917, I was commanding the 413th Battery R.F.A. (4.5 howitzers). On that day we advanced, together with C/301st Brigade R.F.A. (Major W. C. Beck) under the command of Lieutenant-Colonel G. G. Thatcher, D.S.O., R.A., to a position approximately east of Lifta in support of the Infantry.

" In the evening a successful attack was made on an objective, and this position was held during the night. Just before dark Major Beck and myself registered points from the position in order to assist the Infantry in the event of a counter-attack. The night was quiet, but at dawn I saw a good deal of movement among buildings some distance in front, and opened fire, but after a few rounds discovered that the movement was among natives.

" Nothing further occurred and all was quiet. At about 8 to 8.30 a.m. Major Beck telephoned across to me asking would I join him in a reconnaissance forward to ascertain the situation. I agreed, and we met and started off. We proceeded along the road eastwards, and after walking about ten minutes saw a large procession with white flags coming towards us. We halted, while an interpreter came to us, informed us that the procession consisted of the Mayor of Jerusalem, the Chief of Police, and others, and asked us to see the Mayor immediately, as he (the Mayor) had orders to make an immediate surrender of the city. We thereupon went to the Mayor, who greeted us cordially, shook hands, and asked that we would accept the surrender of the city. Major Beck explained that we were junior officers only, without authority to act in the matter. The Mayor, however, insisted that his instructions from the Governor were to surrender the city to the first British officer encountered to obviate bloodshed and material damage, and he asked that we should communicate immediately with the Commander-in-Chief. This we agreed to do as soon as possible, and after further cordial handshaking we returned to our batteries, and Major Beck

reported the whole matter to our Divisional Artillery Head-quarters.

"Two Infantry sergeants were present during the interview. With the procession was a Mr. H. L. Larsson and another American gentleman, both from the American colony, Jerusalem. They expressed great pleasure at the capture of the city by the British, and Mr. Larsson took a photo of a group consisting of the Mayor and other officials, the two Infantry sergeants, Major Beck and myself. This has, however, since been destroyed by order of the G.O.C. the Division.

"The Mayor died some few weeks later of pneumonia, and Major Beck was unfortunately killed by a hostile aeroplane bomb in March 1918."

The first formed party to enter Jerusalem was a party of gunners, with Colonel Bayley commanding the 303rd Brigade R.F.A., Major Cooke, and two subalterns. What occurred is as follows: At daybreak on the morning of the 9th Major Cook moved off with a section of his battery from its position on the Kustal ridge, leaving the other guns to follow when they could be extricated from the deep mud. One of the two guns came to grief in the descent into the wadi and had to be left behind; the remaining gun was dragged up the steep zigzagging track of the Roman road to the plateau. Colonel Bayley, Major Price, and one subaltern were with Major Cooke as he went up the steep track near the Kolonieh-Lifta road. No opposition was encountered, and, to use Major Cooke's own words: "We reached the top and found ourselves, not rushed into a bloody fight, but taking a very lovely sunny walk towards the outskirts of Jerusalem. Presently we saw crowds of women and children, led by an official waving a flag of truce. It turned out to be the Mayor of Jerusalem and his entourage of Arab police and laughing girls."

The Mayor then handed Colonel Bayley a paper, purporting to be the surrender of Jerusalem. Colonel Bayley

pointed out he could not possibly accept the surrender, having no authority to do so ; and reported what had occurred to Brigadier-General Watson, who had just ridden up. Brigadier-General Watson at once transmitted the offer of surrender to the Divisional Commander at Enab, who in his turn forwarded it to the Corps Commander ; and about 11 a.m. an order was received for the surrender to be accepted. In the meantime the Mayor having pointed out the importance of seizing the post office, Major Cooke was ordered by Colonel Bayley to carry this out. Accordingly Major Cooke rode off with his orderly and one Arab policeman for the purpose. As they rode through the streets the policeman shouted wildly : " British coming," and people appeared from everywhere shouting and waving hands in welcome.

Having obtained the keys of the post office and all the Arab police available, Major Cooke proceeded through the cheering crowds to the post office, put a policeman in charge of the room with stamps and office books and shut up all the employees in a room. All wires were found to have been cut.

While he was in the office a body of some fifty Turkish troops, led by officers, marched up, but turned the corner and marched away without taking any notice of his presence. After waiting outside the office for some two hours, during which he suffered from the attentions, more especially of the female portion, of the thankful and rejoicing inhabitants, General Watson and Colonel Bayley turned up with an escort of a sergeant and six gunners. A few minutes later a mounted patrol of the 53rd Division arrived.

Meanwhile General Watson had sent for a company of the 2/17th Battalion, who arrived about 9.30 a.m., and guards were posted at the post office, some of the hospitals, and outside the Jaffa Gate. A little before midday General Shea arrived, and accepted the surrender in the name of the Commander-in-Chief, and General Watson was ordered to make all arrangements for the maintenance of order.

On December 11th, the Commander-in-Chief, followed by representatives of the Allies, made his formal entry into Jerusalem, on foot, by the historic Jaffa Gate. The enthusiasm of the inhabitants knew no bounds. Every nationality, every creed, even the followers of the Prophet themselves, rejoiced in the destruction, for ever, in the city, of Turkish domination.

The following telegram was received from the Corps Commander to General Shea :

It is a fitting reward for the splendid work of your gallant Division since the commencement of operations, that the honour of receiving the surrender of Jerusalem should have fallen to them. My heartiest congratulations, and thank you and them.

The following special orders of the day were issued :

*Brigadier-General I. S. M. Shea, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.,
Commanding 60th Division.*

The G.O.C. wishes to express to all leaders, N.C.O.s and men, Staffs and Departments, his profound admiration and heartfelt thanks for their remarkable achievements.

The enemy was always engaged with eagerness and determination, great difficulties were overcome, and weather conditions which must have caused at times intense suffering were cheerfully endured.

History will tell of the spirit of the 60th Division, the Division to which Jerusalem was surrendered.

12/12/17.

SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY.

*By Lieutenant-General Sir Philip Chetwode, Bt., K.C.M.G.,
C.B., D.S.O., Commanding XX Corps.*

DECEMBER 13, 1917.

Now that the efforts of General Sir E. H. H. Allenby's Army have been crowned by the surrender of Jerusalem, I wish to express to all ranks, services, and Departments of the XX Army Corps my personal thanks and my admiration for the soldierly qualities they have displayed.

I have served as a regimental officer in two campaigns, and no one knows better than I do what the shortness of food, the fatigue

of operating among high mountains, and the cold and wet has meant to the fighting troops ; but in spite of it all, and at the moment when the weather was at its worst, they responded to my call and drove the enemy in one rush through the last defences and beyond Jerusalem. A fine performance, and I am intensely proud of having had the honour of commanding such a body of men. I wish to give special praise to the Divisional Ammunition Columns, Divisional Trains, A.S.C., Supply Services, Mechanical Transport personnel, Camel Transport personnel, and to the Royal Army Medical Corps, and all services whose continuous labour day and night, almost without rest, alone enabled the fighting troops to do what they did.

The Corps Commander wishes the above to be communicated to all ranks.

E. EVANS, *Brigadier-General, D.A., and Q.M.G., XX Corps.*
Head-quarters, XX Corps.

CHAPTER XIX

SUPPLY AND MEDICAL DIFFICULTIES

FOR the next few days the Division enjoyed a period of comparative rest and quiet. The 53rd Division had driven the enemy off the Mount of Olives on the night of the 9th, and on the following day pushed the enemy back from all the ridges whence they could overlook the city from the east, thus isolating Jerusalem and securing the army from any counter-attack from the Jericho road.

On December 11th the 179th Brigade relieved the 180th Brigade in the line, which went into billets in the north-west of the city. All was quiet but for an attack by a small party of the enemy, which was easily repulsed by the 179th Brigade, near Tel-el-Ful. On the 15th the 180th relieved the 179th Brigade in the line, which went into billets in Jerusalem.

Advantage was taken of the quiet period to issue new clothing, make good deficiencies, and above all make the most of the opportunities afforded for washing and disinfecting.

Not to the fighting men alone did this short period of rest come as an inestimable boon; it was not less appreciated by the administrative units, who had had to face almost insurmountable difficulties, and incessant and heavy strain. The following account of getting up supplies to the front by an officer is an excellent example of the daily task that had to be performed. He says :

“ On the morning of December 9, 1917, the great day when Jerusalem fell into our hands, the question of rations for the troops was a serious question for me. All the rations were carried on camel convoys, and these convoys would have to trek long distances, as the troops were to cut across from the west of Jerusalem to the north road to Nablus, and press on as far as they could,

“ The brigade convoys were all distinct and separate, but there was only one road for them to travel for the greater part of the way, and when separate convoys travel on the same road, it is only magic which will keep them apart ; and usually a convoy and a half will reach one brigade, and only a handful of camels another. The convoys were to start from Enab in the early afternoon, and as luck would have it by two o'clock a steady downpour had started. Camel drivers loathe the rain, and when it is a really cold rain on a December day, they are worse than useless. After much cursing and kicking the first convoy was loaded, and started on its way with a guide and escort ; and by degrees the second convoy was got ready, but darkness overtook us before it could be got on to the road. The loading up of the third convoy was terrible work, one-third of the camel drivers and more than one-third of the camels were reported to me as blind by night ; so we had to get more camels, and make up the deficiency with Train waggons. The loading ground was by now a sea of mud, and everything and everybody soaked through. The camel nets and loading cords were sodden and slippery, and the temper of the camels anything but pleasant.

“ Anyhow, by swearing, kicking, and yelling, the camels were loaded and got onto their feet, and by degrees got onto the road ; but, as they were starting off, the waggons of some head-quarter units came down the road, which was none too wide, and got mixed up with the convoy ; cutting into it in places, and at other places moving alongside. It was so dark, and the rain so thick, that you could hardly see a yard in front ; on one side of the road was the Khud, dropping sheer, in places only 3 feet, at others as much as 60 feet. As the trail of the column left the loading ground, mounting my old horse, I rode alongside. I had not gone very far when a Train waggon, which was driving beside a string of camels, lurched across the road, and catching my mare's flank sent her and me over the Khud. For a moment I wondered : Am I going down 60 feet

or only 3 feet? We landed in a rough field $4\frac{1}{2}$ feet below the road: I managed to fall clear, but my poor old mare was a bit scratched and very frightened. How was I to get her back to the road? I could not see, but I knew there was no place low enough to pull her up. Up and down we paced, but without finding anything to help, and the rain came down heavier and colder than ever. Eventually after about half an hour I came on a low wall of loose stones running at right angles to, and nearly the height of, the road, at this point about 5 feet. I pulled the stones about, making a sort of ramp, and by much coaxing and pulling, I got my mare back onto the road.

"All this took some time, and I expected to find that the last convoy had progressed some distance; but I had not ridden more than a hundred yards when I came on the convoy halted. Camels were sitting down across the road, many without drivers, and quite a number with their packs off and tumbled in the road.

"I picked my way slowly along, asking the cause of the halt, but no one knew. I found the second convoy halted just in front of the third, and again the first in front of the second, and of course the tail end of the ones in front so intermingled with the fronts of those behind, that it was impossible to say where one began and the other ended.

"I rode on slowly, until I came to what I supposed was the head of the first convoy, and found a limber, apparently the end of a long convoy, halted in front of it. Here the road was just wide enough for two limbers to pass one another. There were a few officers about, but none could tell what was in front of them nor why it was halted. I, and the senior supply officer, who was with me, rode on to investigate. We only found two limbers in front of us, and could not think why they did not move. I cursed what I thought was a driver, and found I was wasting my breath on a mule. I dismounted and walked round the limber; it was so dark one could only feel. The result of my investigations was that there were two limbers

moving in opposite directions, facing each other in the middle of the road, and each driver thought that the one in front of him was moving in the same direction as himself. We soon had this altered, and the convoys started off again down the hill to Kolundia.

"Started off, I say, but the column was a strange elongated one. In some cases the camels had refused to get up, in others the drivers had disappeared.

"No driver is supposed to be in charge of more than three camels, but in many cases I found only one man to twelve camels; the other men had disappeared, slunk off the road, taken refuge somewhere, and had no intention of moving till morning.

"These drivers were mainly drawn from the Egyptian fellaheen, and had another annoying trait—when they were very wet and cold, and some distance from camp, they would sit down and sob themselves to death. A number of the drivers tried the game on that night.

"The straggling column wound its way down the hill to Kolundia, where it was again blocked by a 'caterpillar'-driven tractor which had broken down across the road. We eventually got round this obstacle and made our way up the steep winding slope to Lifta. I, and the other officers, rode up and down the column, trying to keep it together and on the move, but it was difficult work, and there were many 'hiatus's' in the column, where a camel driver was sitting down and weeping, and had to be kicked into animation.

"Half-way up Lifta hill I found one man sobbing hard, and there were thirty camels behind him, linked one behind the other, and no other drivers in sight. The supply officer and I kicked him all the way up the hill to the Train camp at Lifta, but it was heavy, hard work. Once we got him to camp, at about 5.30 a.m., a waste piece of ground half under water, he was happy. He was in camp, and there were others there, he curled up in a pool of water and went to sleep.

"Detachments of the convoys continued to arrive all through the next morning, and twenty-four hours after the start there were still a number of camels and drivers missing; though altogether they had not gone more than eight miles. Of these a number of camels had gone over the Khud, and some of the drivers sobbed themselves dead.

"This story sounds like fiction, and camel officers and others who understand camels will tell me I lie, but it is nevertheless a fact.

"When the Division was encompassing Jerusalem, Headquarters were at Enab, and the ration dump, from which brigades and others drew their rations, was on two narrow strips of ground on either side of the road. The strip on the lower side was barely twenty yards wide, and was bounded by a sheer precipice falling some hundred feet or so.

"One very wet afternoon, just before the attack on Jerusalem, when the road was crowded with traffic and the troops who were taking over from our brigades in the north, the units sent for their rations. I thought we should never get finished; it was the work of hours to get the convoys on to the dumps off the road, and the camels were slipping and falling about, and the drivers wet and miserable.

"In the middle of operations, when it was beginning to get dark, a big camel had just been loaded up at the lower dump and was being made to rise. It rose up quietly and stood for a second or two; then slowly its legs started to slip sideways and it went down plump, with its forelegs at right angles to it, both legs in line. It blocked the whole path. The camel officer came up and said, 'Oh! it's broken both its shoulders, unload it, shoot it, and roll it over the Khud. It is the only way.' That camel almost had a twinkle in its eye, and I'm sure it understood, but it did not seem perturbed. Two or three drivers fell too, and in a couple of minutes had its load and its pack off.

No sooner was this done, than the camel seemed to press its legs in sideways slowly, and, to my amazement, raise itself by this means. It stood up, looked round, and then trotted away after the camels that were already loaded. We did not load it again for fear it should repeat the trick. That camel would have made a fortune on the music hall stage."

The medical units suffered the same difficulties in the matter of transport, and, though fortunately the casualties were comparatively light, there were heavy casualties from sickness owing to exposure to the cold and inclement weather. The following sketch of their work during the operation before Jerusalem by Colonel Dowsett is of interest :

"On November 24th the 2/4th Field Ambulance accompanied the 179th Brigade up into the foothills to Khuret-el-Enab, and there took over the monastery. This was occupied by most hospitable French monks who assisted in every way. The chapel itself was used as the main ward, and the whole of the rest of the building was rapidly converted into a relay hospital, which proved useful for many months afterwards. The next day the 2/5th Field Ambulance accompanying the 180th Brigade passed through Enab and proceeded in a north-easterly direction to Kubeibeh. Here the Field Ambulance took over the large monastery from the 234th Field Ambulance, which formed an excellent hospital, though in a somewhat dangerous position. There was no road from Enab to Kubeibeh, only a very rough track, and that uphill and down dale, only passable for mules and camels, and very difficult for these when loaded. It was about three hours' trek. On arrival at Kubeibeh the 2/5th Field Ambulance found the place congested with wounded, many of which were serious cases, which were quite unsuitable for loading on camels, so that some sixty or more had to be man-handled all the way to Enab, a most arduous and difficult task, before much else could be done.

"On the 27th the 2/6th Field Ambulance accompanied the 181st Brigade to the Beit Izza position, and took over the monastery in Kubeibeh from the 1/2nd Lowland Field Ambulance as its main dressing station. There was very hard fighting for the two Brigades around the Nebi Samwil position, and the bearers of the two Field Ambulances had an exceedingly hard and trying time getting the wounded away to Kubeibeh, over terribly rough and hilly country.

"The main dressing station of the 2/5th at Kubeibeh was shelled continuously all the morning of the 29th, but only one man was hit, and that was the orderly at the gate of the hospice. All cases from Kubeibeh were evacuated by camel and mule to the 2/4th Field Ambulance at the monastery at Enab, and then to the Divisional Motor Road-Head established at Latron, whence they were sent on by Divisional motor ambulances to Junction Station, so that the divisional responsibility for evacuation was a very long one, but nevertheless seemed as nothing to what had to be done, a few months later, across the Jordan.

"On November 4th moves began to take place; the 2/5th and 2/6th Field Ambulances were relieved, and retired to the Enab area with their respective Brigades. Also the 60th Division Field Ambulance Immobile arrived at Enab and took over from the 2/4th Field Ambulance. By the evening of the 6th all arrangements were made for the attack on Jerusalem, of which the 60th Division was about to take the lion's share. Early the next morning the rain began in real earnest, and persisted relentlessly with but few intermissions for some days. The roads and paths were soon like a quagmire, and the task of the camels was pitiful to watch. Worse still was the plight of the men. The rain came upon us rather unawares, and found most of the men with nothing but their summer kit as worn in the desert, and hardly fitted to withstand the continuous rain and biting winds of the Judean Hills while waiting for the order to move. The order came later in the evening. Twelve light-horsed ambulance waggons, which

had been out for some days, arrived just in the nick of time ; with the waggons, too, arrived 450 blankets which had been sent for in a somewhat irregular, though only possible, manner, and which were of the utmost value, under the trying circumstances ahead. The main dressing station parties of all the Field Ambulances were kept near the road a mile or two east of Enab. The rest of the 2/4th Field Ambulance accompanied the 179th Brigade down into the Wadi Surah, but, on account of the nature of the country to be traversed, was obliged to go without any means of transport for evacuation purposes, the intention being to hold up all wounded in the Ain Karim area until, either they could be fetched later from Kolonieh, or from Jerusalem when the city had fallen. The bearers had a very strenuous time collecting the wounded during the hard fighting on the hill-sides, and were under a heavy fire for a good deal of the time, but the utmost gallantry was shown by all ranks ; one private went so far, with judicious bluff, as to capture an unwounded and armed Turk.

“The 2/5th Field Ambulance in the meantime had advanced as far as Kolonieh, where it formed its advanced dressing station, and the bearers in the early morning collected wounded off the heights and, by superhuman efforts, brought them down the almost precipitous cliff-sides. During the afternoon all available ambulance waggons and sand carts of the other Field Ambulances were brought up to Kolonieh, to evacuate to Enab ; and one convoy of camel cacolets of the 2/4th Field Ambulance was sent along to the Wadi Surah to try and evacuate Ain Karim to Kolonieh ; but the latter part of the journey proved so precipitous that it was not repeated, and all further cases held up in Ain Karim till the city should fall. During the attack on Jerusalem and the period of consolidation, that is, from December 8th to 11th, 345 sick and 516 wounded were admitted to the three Field Ambulances combined. The comparatively large number

of sick was due, no doubt, to the atrocious weather, and exposure, in summer kit, in the Judean Hills. In considering the work done by the Field Ambulances during the period, it must be remembered that, in addition to the above, there were 459 Turkish sick and wounded taken over in Jerusalem. It is interesting to record that the first Union Jack to be flown in Jerusalem was hoisted by the 2/6th Field Ambulance, which was the first medical unit to open a dressing station in the Holy City. Very soon afterwards the flag, strange to say, became "unservicable," and, still stranger to relate, disappeared. On his return to England a certain medical officer found it in his kit, and presented it to a London Hospital in want of funds. The flag was sold for the benefit of the hospital, and fetched £200."

CHAPTER XX

SECURING JERUSALEM

THOUGH Jerusalem itself was now in our hands and completely isolated, the line we held was nowhere more than three miles distant from the city; measures had to be taken to render it secure from attack. It was scarcely to be expected that the Turks, supported by their German advisers, would tamely allow us to sit down unmolested in the positions we had gained, when the recapture of the city would mean so much to them, and such a complete loss of prestige in the whole Eastern world to us.

On December 10th we practically held a line, some forty miles in length, right across the country from Jaffa in the west, covering the Jerusalem-Jaffa road, to Jerusalem in the east. The XX Corps, in the Jerusalem area, extended from a point north-east of Bethlehem to the Mount of Olives, facing east, held by the 53rd Division. The 60th Division carried on the line thence to Tel-el-Ful, an important eminence whence the line turned more to the westward, and on to near Nebi Samwil; the 74th and 10th Divisions carrying on thence to near Beit Sira. The Western portion, thence to the coast, was held by General Bulfin's XXI Corps.

The Commander-in-Chief's plan was to advance the whole line a distance of six to eight miles. Operations were commenced by the XXI Corps, in the coastal area, which on December 21st and 22nd successfully secured the passage of the River Auja, and gained all its objectives.

Things on the Divisional front were quiet, on the whole, with the exception of small moves for the adjustment of the line, and a few minor operations. Advantage was taken of the fine weather, which lasted for some days, to improve the condition of the roads and communications. The

inhabitants of the villages, men and women alike, came forward willingly to help, attracted by the good wages offered and paid in cash.

On December 11th, a small party of the enemy appeared on the right of the 2/15th on Tel-el-Ful, who were quickly repulsed with the bayonet, and on the 13th, the 53rd Division further advanced its position. On the same day the 2/21st and 2/22nd of the 181st Brigade, on their left, made a dashing attack, capturing Ras-el-Karrabeh, near Anata, taking forty-three prisoners and two machine guns.

On December 18th, Captain Reynolds and twenty men of the 2/20th occupied Ras-el-Tawil, capturing two Turkish officers and twenty-three men.

On the 21st the 53rd Division took over the line as far as the Wadi Anata, and the portion of the Division relieved took over part of the line east of Nebi Samwil from the 74th Division. On the same date, immediately after dark, two platoons of the 2/24th assaulted a Turkish post on the ridge north-west of Hannina, which prevented forward reconnaissance and menaced our lateral communications. The ridge was carried, but about 9 p.m. the enemy counter-attacked with a force estimated at about 400 men. The first attack was repulsed, but further attacks continued until about 11 p.m., when, reinforcements having arrived, the Turks were driven off. The force withdrew at daybreak, the position being untenable on account of heavy shelling by the enemy, who, however, did not reoccupy the post. It was subsequently reoccupied by us and held with a platoon by day and a company by night.

At 3 a.m. on the 22nd, the Turks in superior force rushed Ras-el-Tawil, held by the 2/17th, and forced back the post. Orders were given for its recapture at dawn, but the enemy had retired. The Corps Commander's plan for the advance, which was provisionally timed to commence on the 24th, was to secure a line from Obeid, about seven miles east of Bethlehem, to the Jericho road, about five miles to the east of Jerusalem; then on through Anata,

Hizmeh, Jebu, Beitun, and Deir Izbzin to Suffa. To carry out this plan, the 60th Division, with its right protected by the 53rd Division, were to advance in a northerly direction astride the Jerusalem-Nablus road, while the 10th and 74th Divisions made sweeping movement eastward from Foka and Tehta, on the right flank of the enemy.

As a preliminary operation the 180th Brigade were to carry the line forward north of Shafat on the 23rd. At 5.15 on that day the Brigade assaulted a commanding position known as Khurbet Adaseh ; the attack was carried out by the 2/18th ; covered by our barrage, they got to within a hundred yards of the summit under a murderous fire from the enemy, but could get no further, and were compelled to give ground by strong counter-attacks. The attack was finally called off, and they retired covered by the 2/19th. The rains having come on again with great severity, the work on the roads had to be abandoned and the general offensive postponed. The casualties suffered were very severe. Killed : 3 officers, 28 other ranks ; wounded : 5 officers, and 68 other ranks ; with 32 other ranks missing.

A search party sent out subsequently by Colonel Norton, after the capture of Bireh, found on Khurbet Adaseh the bodies of some forty men, including two officers of the 2/18th, stripped : some killed in action, and some who had been obviously bayoneted when wounded. Several dead Turks were found at Bireh later wearing the uniform of the 2/18th.

The new advance was ordered for the 27th.

On the 24th, intelligence was received that the Turks intended to attack us on the Nablus road, probably on the night of the 25th or morning of the 26th.

We had during the advance from Beersheba captured the Turkish wireless code, and now a message was intercepted that an attempt was to be made to recapture Jerusalem. In consequence, our plans were somewhat altered : the night attack by the 74th Division on the left

was to take place on the night of the 24th/25th ; the 179th Brigade relieved the 180th on the right of the line. The Queen's Westminsters held Tel-el-Ful with the Kensingtons on their left, the Civil Service in support, and the London Scottish in reserve. The 180th Machine-gun Company and Trench-mortar Battery were attached to the Brigade. The 181st Brigade were on their left, north of Hannina.

Five deserters and a prisoner captured confirmed the information of the intended attack. The prisoner, who belonged to the 1st Turkish Division, which had just arrived at Bireh, stated that the 1st, 19th, 24th, and 53rd Turkish Divisions were to attack in front, and the 26th and 27th to operate on the Jericho side. The greater part of these Divisions were fresh troops, unshaken by defeat ; while they contained, it was said, a large number of " Sturm Truppen," all specially picked men.

On the 26th, the 2/20th, who were spending their Christmas in Jerusalem, where all units had been given a turn in billets, received orders to proceed at once to Wadi Beit Hannina as a reserve to the 181st Brigade ; while the 2/17th and 2/19th were ordered to be ready to move out at ten minutes' notice. On the evening of the 26th the Division stood in the line as follows : the 179th Brigade on the right, with the 2/15th, less two companies on the extreme right, the 2/16th with one company of the 2/15th at Tel-el-Ful, the 2/13th and one company 2/15th Nablus road to Wadi Beit Hannina, with the 2/14th in Brigade reserve at Shafat.

The 181st Brigade on the left were distributed as follows : the 2/24th and two companies 2/23rd at Beit Hannina, and two companies 2/20th in Brigade reserve at Beir Ikse, the 2/22nd on the Nebi Samwil defences, with the 2/21st in support south of Beit Hannina.

The 180th Brigade were in divisional reserve in the northern outskirts of Jerusalem, with the 2/20th, as before mentioned, thrown forward ready to reinforce either flank.

Rain fell steadily throughout the 24th, 25th, and 26th, with a biting wind, and the troops suffered severely from the cold and exposure, there being no shelter of any kind. Everyone was soaked to the skin, and sleep was out of the question, as the men lay in the open during the earlier part of the night of the 26th/27th, eagerly awaiting the opening of the expected Turkish attack. At 11.30 p.m. the attack opened ; a post found by the 2/13th at the bridge where the road crosses the Wadi-el-Dumm was driven in by strong patrols ; and at the same time the outpost line from Ras-el-Tawil to the quarries, after putting up a good resistance, was forced to withdraw to the main line of defence by overwhelming numbers of the enemy.

At 1.30 a.m., preceded by a short but heavy bombardment, the enemy's attack developed along the whole line, the main attack being delivered against Tel-el-Ful, a conical hill, covered with large boulders and loose stones, and possibly the most important point in the whole line. Between 1.30 and 8 a.m., no less than eight attacks were made on the eminence, and just before dawn the Turks succeeded in establishing a footing in a short length of the main position, but with the help of two platoons of the 2/15th, who advanced most gallantly in the face of a strong enfilade fire from field guns, which caused casualties to the amount of 50 per cent. of their strength, the enemy was driven out after a sharp bayonet fight.

At 2.30 a.m. the advanced parties of the 2/24th were most fiercely attacked, under cover of artillery and enfilade machine-gun fire from the direction of Khurbet Adaseh, and Nebala. The attack was at once repulsed, this was repeated thrice before 6.30, each assault being beaten back with heavy loss, after severe fighting with rifle, machine-gun, and Stokes-mortar fire. The attacks ceased for a while after 6.30, but the enemy kept up a heavy bombardment all the forenoon. During the afternoon this portion of the line was reorganised, the 2/21st relieving the 2/24th in the right sector : the 2/23rd took over the centre sector, and

the 2/22nd the left. The 2/24th were withdrawn to Brigade reserve.

There was a lull in the attacks after 8 a.m., and advantage was taken to replenish supplies of bombs and ammunition, and to reorganise the reserves which had been brought into the line.

During the lull both sides held their positions ; on the main front of Tel-el-Ful the enemy was established behind a wall scarcely 150 yards from the position held by the Queen's Westminsters behind another wall in rear of the ridge. On their left sub-section the enemy was driven off the first time he attacked, and did not attack again.

Throughout the morning the enemy carried on an intermittent shelling of the whole line, and just before one o'clock delivered a sudden and unexpected attack of extreme violence against our whole front. The Turks came on with the violence of despair, and even penetrated some small elements of our line. The Queen's Westminsters' line was broken in one place : a platoon had taken advantage of the lull to issue rations and snatch a hasty meal. Suddenly they found themselves almost surrounded by a considerable number of the enemy. There was nothing for it but to retire, and worse still abandon the rations, which the Turks had not much time to enjoy ; a counter-attack soon restored the situation. Every small penetration was quickly dealt with, the Turks not appreciating the handiness of the Londoner with his bayonet. By 1.10 the attack was entirely beaten off.

This was the enemy's last great effort ; the Turk had had all the fight knocked out of him for the time being, though during the afternoon the greater part of our line was subjected to heavy shelling, especially between the Nablus road and the Wadi Beit Hannina.

At dusk the firing petered out, and the Division stood triumphant on the line they held against thirteen desperate assaults, over ground not altogether too favourable for the defence. The steep slopes, in many places, afforded dead

ground for the enemy, in places to within 50 yards of our front ; while in front of Tel-el-Ful our positions were liable to enfilade fire from the enemy, who had, moreover, several covered lines of approach.

The Turk fought with fierce determination ; it is said that they had been told that there were no British soldiers present, and that they were only up against Egyptians, also that if they retook Jerusalem they should for one whole day be allowed to do as they pleased in the city. Obviously the inhabitants had a providential escape. Unfortunately for them they had a very rude awakening, their casualties being undoubtedly very heavy. During the night, under cover of the Red Crescent, large numbers of the enemy were busy removing their wounded and burying their dead ; and yet we subsequently counted 156 dead on the east side of the Nablus road, and 150 on the west side.

Our casualties amounted to 4 officers and 58 other ranks killed, and 7 officers and 173 other ranks wounded, with 30 other ranks missing.

The enemy's attacks on the 53rd Division had been heavy, but had met with the same result ; every attack being successfully beaten off.

The 74th Division, meanwhile, had launched their attack against the enemy's right, and by dusk had succeeded in reaching a line, Zeitun ridge-Deir Izbzia. At half-past six orders were received to prepare for immediate advance.

The night passed quietly.

Though this desperate attack by the enemy had forestalled our advance up the Nablus road, it was merely delayed, and the flanking movements by the 74th and 10th Divisions in no way interfered with. That the Turk had been forced to abandon his counter-offensive on the Nablus road was definitely proved by messages from the Flying Corps to the effect that he was moving his reserves eastwards to meet the attack on his right flank.

On the morning of the 28th the Turks still occupied positions on our immediate front, but in no great strength.

Orders were issued for the 179th Brigade to seize Khurbet Adaseh, while the 181st Brigade swung round their left, to include Nebala and El Jib, and gain touch with the 74th Division. The 2/16th reported that Ras-el-Tawel was still held in force, but no enemy were to be found elsewhere. Supported by artillery, one and a half companies of the 2/16th advanced and captured the hill, taking thirty-six prisoners and two machine guns. Khurbet Adaseh being reported occupied by patrols only, one company of the 2/13th was sent up to occupy it about 5.30.

Orders had previously been issued that, as soon as Khurbet Adaseh was occupied, the 180th and 181st Brigades were to advance to the line Er Ram-Rafat. The 179th Brigade was ordered to concentrate behind the 180th; the 2/16th and 2/15th had, meantime, been relieved east of Nablus by a battalion of the 53rd Division. The 180th Division concentrated, in the afternoon in the wadi north of Shafat, in readiness to attack Er Ram at dusk. The advance commenced about 6.30, the 2/20th on the right, the 2/19th on the left; the right flank covered by the 53rd Division, and the line was occupied by a quarter-past seven, without any serious opposition, except at Er Ram, which was carried by the 2/20th after a ten minutes' Artillery bombardment. The Turks bolted as soon as the Battalion entered the village. Several dead Turks were found, and twenty-one prisoners and a machine gun captured.

The 181st Brigade swinging round their left, according to orders, pushed forward the 2/22nd and occupied El Jib; while the 2/23rd advancing in echelon behind them carried their objective without opposition, and by half-past twelve the Brigade had occupied both Nebala and El Jib. Pushing on, the Brigade's whole objective was secured during the afternoon.

Orders were received at 11 p.m. for the 180th and 181st Brigades to continue their advance on their final objectives at 8 a.m. the next morning.

The country to be traversed now became, perhaps, the most difficult yet encountered. It consisted of a succession of steep, rocky hills, intersected by wadis with almost precipitous sides. The advance consequently was slow and arduous, the mere physical effort required to scale the heights was extreme, and fortunately but little opposition was encountered for some time.

The 180th Brigade on the right, before being seriously opposed, occupied hills north of Kefr Akab and Tel-el-Nebbeh, which were taken by the 2/20th and 2/19th respectively; but here they had come under heavy Artillery fire from the direction of Bireh and Ras-el-Tahuneh. Further advance was impossible until the 303rd Field Artillery Brigade, which was supporting the group, could come into action. Their arrival was delayed by the Kolundia track not being possible for guns, which had compelled them to proceed into action by the main road. The guns eventually arrived about 2.30 p.m., and the 181st Brigade was enabled to continue its advance. By 4.15 the two attacking battalions, the 2/22nd and 2/23rd, were in possession of the Tahuneh ridge, a prominent feature to the north of Bireh, and the one remaining position that commanded our advance by the enemy. Under cover of intense Artillery bombardment the two battalions successfully carried the ridge, with very few casualties, in spite of somewhat severe fighting and a stubborn resistance by the enemy.

At 9 p.m. the 2/23rd advanced further to high ground beyond, while the 2/24th moved forward in support, the 2/22nd remaining in Brigade reserve at Ras-el-Tahuneh.

Meanwhile, the 180th Brigade were seriously engaged on the right, the fighting falling principally on the 2/19th and 2/20th Battalions.

The enemy had taken up a strong position at Shab Salah, a dominating height with a deep wadi in front, from which he could watch our every movement. Colonel Warde Aldam, commanding the 2/20th, having reconnoitred

the position, determined that an organised assault covered by Artillery was essential, unless the attack was to cause us heavy casualties. At 2.30 p.m. the attack commenced under heavy Artillery fire, the 2/20th on the right, the 2/19th on the left. Under a heavy shell fire the troops went down several hundred feet of steep and broken incline into the wadi, and then up the steep terraced hill to the crest over a thousand feet above them. Reorganising just under the ridge, they went over the crest with a rush, charging the Turks behind their sangars, who fell back a little. Later the Turks counter-attacked under cover of heavy machine-gun and rifle-fire, but were effectively driven off the ridge with the bayonet ; and before dusk our line was fully established on the northern slope of the hill, and the Turks could be seen in full retreat. By 6.30 the 2/17th and 2/18th pushed through and captured the ridge half a mile north-west of Burkah.

By 11 p.m. the 180th and 181st Brigades occupied their objective, the line Beitun-Balua-Khurbet-el-Burj. The advance was not opposed, but considering the terrible nature of the country, was a very praiseworthy performance. The casualties suffered by the Division during the advance on December 28th and 29th amounted to 3 officers and 13 other ranks killed ; 2 officers and 82 other ranks wounded, mostly of the 2/20th Battalion.

The Division had performed a great task in the three days. In bitterly cold and wet weather they had stood firm on the defensive, defeated desperate assaults by a very determined enemy, and then, advancing over a difficult, broken and precipitous country, driven him from position after position ; until all that remained of the III Turkish Corps, that set out to recapture the Holy City, was a mob of demoralised men streaming north.

CHAPTER XXI

JERICHO

THE Corps had now gained possession of all its objectives, all enemy resistance on our right flank had ceased, and the city was virtually secure from capture from the north. During the three day's fighting the Corps had captured 39 officers, 711 other ranks, and 17 machine guns ; while 1,006 enemy dead had been counted. For the next few weeks the troops were to enjoy a period of comparative tranquillity.

On December 31st orders were issued for the 53rd and 60th Divisions to change places, which brought the Division to the extreme right of the line and the immediate neighbourhood of Jerusalem, with Head-quarters in the city itself. The move was completed on January 3rd.

The task of the Division was to cover Jerusalem from the east and north-east, and the Jerusalem-Nablus road as far as a line Kafr Huta-Burkah-Tel-el-Naseh ; also to protect the Bethlehem-Hebron road as far as Hebron. The defence was divided into three sectors. Bethlehem sector held by the Corps Cavalry, and a detachment of the Gwalior Infantry, attached to the Division ; the Jerusalem defences held by the 179th Brigade, and the 303rd Field Artillery Brigade ; and the Nablus road defences garrisoned by the 180th Brigade and the 301st Field Artillery Brigade. With the 181st Brigade and the 302nd Artillery Brigade in divisional reserve, in billets north of Jerusalem.

The general system of defence was to consist of a system of mutually supporting and strongly defended localities, which could be held by small garrisons, and behind which mobile reserves were placed ; with a system of strong posts, selected in rear of the front line, as a second line of defence.

For two months the Division had been marching and fighting, almost without interruption, often under most

trying weather conditions, and the prolonged halt, in a place of such surpassing interest as Jerusalem, seemed a fitting climax to the trials which it had faced with such unfailing cheerfulness and courage. To the medical and transport units it meant a temporary respite from the intense mental strain which the last two months had entailed. Three hospitals were taken over in Jerusalem, and a divisional convalescent home opened at the Ratisbone Monastery on the hill west of Jerusalem. The Divisional dump, which had been at Lifta, was moved into the yard of a large school on the Jaffa road, and on January 13th to Kilo 1, just beyond the railway station.

Leave was freely granted to Cairo and Alexandria, and the various points of interest, in and about the city, were freely visited by all ranks; the London Scottish even going so far as to obtain permission to march the Battalion as far as Bethlehem, so that all ranks might have an opportunity of visiting the "Church of the Nativity." The time, however, was not all spent in sightseeing. There was plenty to be done: intensive training was carried on, classes for specialist training, signalling, bombing, and machine gun. Trenches were dug, sangars built, and lateral communications improved.

A good deal of cleaning up and other sanitary work was performed by the medical units. Colonel Dowsett writes: "During the whole period in and around Jerusalem disinfection was the order of the day for everyone within reach. Most elaborate baths and disinfectors were improvised in many places for the purpose, and proved most useful."

The Commander-in-Chief visited the front in January and February, and General Shea took the opportunity of inspecting most of the units.

Patrolling was carried out by day, the country being too intricate for night work. In view of an ultimate advance to the eastward constant reconnaissances were made. The peace was undisturbed, save for an occasional collision between patrols. On January 12th the 2/13th captured

a patrol of fifteen men ; and on the 13th a company of the 2/17th raided Mickmas at dawn, and captured five Turks in a house, after a scuffle, having one man wounded.

On January 23rd the 2/20th marched on special duty to Hebron, arriving at midday on the 25th ; some armoured cars and a squadron of the Westminster Dragoons arrived later. The special duty to be performed was a search for rifles in the neighbouring villages, which were known to be in possession of the inhabitants. Two thousand four hundred were collected in all, four hundred and seventy of them modern. On February 2nd the Battalion returned to Jerusalem.

Early in February preparations were taken in hand for an advance on Jericho. The defeated Turkish Army in its flight had split in two, one portion moving north on Nablus, the other retiring east down the Jericho road, and which was now holding a strong position in the Wilderness of Judea. It was obvious that before any advance north could be made, this force must be brushed aside to secure the natural protection for our right flank of the Jordan and the Dead Sea. Moreover, the Arab forces, under the King of Hedjaz, were advancing against the Turks on the east side of the Jordan, and it was impossible to link up with them while the Turkish force was interposed.

From Jerusalem to Jericho, as the crow flies, is about sixteen miles, and a metalled road in good repair runs between them, in what is a general east and west direction. There are also several old roads and tracks leading down to the Jordan valley, but only practicable for pack transport. The descent to Jericho is some 3,000 feet, and to the Jordan itself another 800 feet, the river being some 1,100 feet below sea-level.

The Wadi Fareh, called lower down the Wadi Kelt, a huge and very deep wadi, runs down a little distance north of the road, issuing into the Jordan valley in a deep and forbidding gorge.

The whole country as far as the Jordan valley is a barren patchwork of separated, steep, and in many places precipitous hills ; about as difficult and forbidding a country as one could well imagine.

The main line of Turkish defences crossed the Jerusalem-Jericho road at Talat-ed-Dumm, some eight miles east of Jerusalem, running thence north and south to Ras-el-Tawil and El Muntar respectively.

The attack which was arranged for the middle of February had for its object the driving of the Turks to the east of the Jordan, and the destruction or removal of all their stores and boats from the Dead Sea.

The 60th Division was selected to carry out the task, assisted by two mounted brigades of the Anzac Division.

The attacking troops were divided into three groups, as follows :

179th Brigade Group On the right	{ 179th Infantry Brigade Artillery Group 521st Field Company, R.E. Wellington Mounted Rifles
180th Group In the centre	{ 180th Infantry Group Artillery Group R.E. Detachment (For repair of culverts)
181st Brigade Group On the left	{ 181st Infantry Brigade Artillery Group 519th Company R.E. Two Companies of Pioneers.

The reserve was found by the 231st Brigade (74th Division). The operations were to be divided into three stages. The first objective the line : El Muntar-Arak Ibraim-Ras-el-Tawil ; the second line Jebel Ektief-Talet-ed-Dumm ; the third eastward to Rujm Esh Shemaiyeh-Kakun-Jebel Kuruntul.

The 53rd Division were to co-operate by holding such high ground on our left as would prevent any hostile movement from the north against our left flank.

The first objectives were so widely dispersed that the three groups had to operate quite independently; co-operation was only possible between the 179th and 180th against the second and third objectives.

As a preliminary move the 181st Brigade on February 14th seized Mukhmas and Tel-es-Suwan, to enable reconnaissance to be made towards Splash Hill and Ras-el-Tawil, and captured eight prisoners. Round Hill was subsequently taken by the 2/21st, with eleven prisoners; but they were severely counter-attacked, and suffered about thirty casualties. On the night of the 18th-19th the three groups moved to their positions of assembly. By dawn on the 19th, the London Scottish, on the extreme right of the line, with their right flank covered by the Wellington Mounted Rifles, occupied El Muntar, a steep rocky hill, precipitous on its eastern and southern faces, without opposition. They occupied the hill until about 5 p.m., when they marched to Rujm Rehif, where the Battalion concentrated and spent the night, in readiness to support the attack on Jebel Ektief the following day. Meanwhile the other battalions of the Brigade had been working forward over very difficult ground, in touch with the right of the 180th Brigade; but encountering no opposition except from Turkish outposts who fell back on Jebel Ektief. Great caution, however, was necessary, as a large force of the enemy had been reported by the Flying Corps during the afternoon moving from Ektief towards our line. Owing to the fact that the 2/18th, about 9.30 p.m. on the 19th, were heavily counter-attacked, the advance of the 2/13th on the left of the Brigade had to be carried out extremely slowly and carefully in the darkness of the night. Delayed by this and the extreme difficulty of the ground, culminating in a portion so precipitous that it could only be negotiated by making ropes of puttees, they failed to reach their place

of deployment. Colonel Clark of the 2/16th, rapidly appreciating the position, sent up two companies of his Battalion to supply their place.

Meanwhile the 180th Brigade moved forward, the 2/18th on the right, the 2/19th in the centre, the 2/20th on the left, and the 2/17th in reserve. The 2/20th were to attack Arak Ibraim and the high ground to the east of it, to prepare the way for the attack on Talat-ed-Dumm by the 2/18th and 2/19th. By 6.10 a.m. the summit of Arak Ibraim was taken, but shortly afterwards the Battalion came under a heavy fire from Artillery, rifle, and machine guns, from a dominating ridge in front, and the advance was stopped. It was not till after three assaults, and a considerable casualty list, that the ridge was carried at 2.30 p.m., under cover of a heavy Artillery fire. The difficulties experienced in bringing up the guns were extreme. Major Cooke, commanding the 303rd Field Artillery Brigade, supporting the group, writes: "On the way to support the 2/20th, finding the bridge blown up, we unhooked the teams, and with the help of sixty men of the 2/20th, dragged the guns bodily down into the wadi and up the other side, in time to render much needed aid to the Infantry held up south of Talat-ed-Dumm."

The 2/18th on the right, and the 2/19th on the left of the Jericho road, together with the 2/17th up the road, pushed out strong patrols to secure further ground for the attack on Talat-ed-Dumm; by 12.40 a line had been secured, and an armoured car reported that the bridge had been blown up. The 2/20th were ordered to consolidate the ground on the captured ridge. About 9.15 p.m. fire was opened on patrols of the 2/18th, who retired to the out-post line held by two companies under Major Crabbe. Suddenly a determined counter-attack was opened on the exposed flank held by the two companies, and a hard struggle ensued in which the Turks lost heavily before they were beaten off. The attack was repeated and penetrated our

line, but was driven off, and it was past 10 p.m. before the Turks finally retired. The two companies had fought well, and held their line in spite of great determination shown by the enemy. The Turks on withdrawal carried off all their dead except two, but left ten rifles behind. The rest of the night passed quietly except for intermittent Artillery and rifle fire, and the three battalions were in their position of deployment in Wadi Sidr at dawn.

On the extreme left of the line the 2/23rd captured Splash Hill at 6 a.m., securing thirty-two prisoners; and about 9.30 a.m. the Turks abandoned Ras-el-Tawil, owing to our Artillery fire.

The Division had successfully advanced three miles during the 19th on the whole front. Armoured cars reconnoitred Jericho, but were stopped by a broken bridge three-quarters of a mile farther on.

The next morning at 5.15 a.m. a heavy bombardment opened on Talat-ed-Dumm and Jebel Ektief, assisted by covering fire from machine guns, the Turks replying with vigour. The advancing battalions of the 180th Brigade found the position strongly held by the Turks, assisted by a considerable force of Artillery and a large number of machine guns. In spite of this they advanced unchecked, and by 7 a.m. had taken Khan Hathrurah and the high ground adjoining; a quarter of an hour later the 2/19th had captured the Talat-ed-Dumm in the face of stubborn resistance by the Turks.

The damage done to the road by the Turks necessitated some repairs before the guns could be advanced, many culverts being wrecked. This was rapidly remedied by the Engineers and three companies of the 20th who had been sent to assist, and a further advance of some 2,000 yards was made. The remaining company of the 2/20th was employed guarding the flank of the 2/19th.

The 2/18th, together with a battery, now turned aside to assist the 179th Brigade, who were up against a very stiff proposition in their attack on Jebel Ektief.

The ground over which their attack had to be made proved most rugged and difficult, and there was only one approach by which the assaulting troops could climb the hill. This spur was allotted to the 2/15th, and was swept by machine-gun fire from the enemy trenches on the forward slope of the hill. At 7 a.m. the Artillery bombardment opened and continued until 8 a.m., when the 2/15th moved to the attack, with A and B Companies in the front line, C in support, and D in reserve. The advance, officially described as "trickling forward," went forward as the barrage lifted, and C Company were brought up from support to the left, to take the place that should have been filled by the Kensingtons. At 9.15, after a second barrage for fifteen minutes, the Battalion assaulted, and, in spite of heavy frontal fire, captured the first line. By this time the two companies of the Queen's Westminsters had come up and silenced the machine guns enfilading the advance. The 2/15th found a valley leading to the second ridge, and after a short rest, this was rushed by C Company, under Captain Wills and Company Sergeant-Major Oldcorn. Two captured machine guns were turned on the enemy, the third ridge stormed, and by midday the hill was in our possession.

Some Turks with machine guns still remained on the hills between Ektief and Talat-ed-Dumm, but in the course of the afternoon these were all cleared up by the Kensingtons. The 2/15th and two companies of the 2/16th remained on Ektief, under fire from Turkish guns covering the retreat to the eastward. The 2/13th moved off to the left and took post on the high ground to fill the gap between the 179th and 180th Brigades.

The remaining two companies of the 2/16th and 2/14th, with the 10th Mountain Howitzer Battery, moved into reserve.

The 181st Division continued their advance towards Kuruntul before dawn, on the north of the Wadi Fareh, over difficult country. The 2/21st leading on the right,

with the 2/24th on the left, the 2/22nd and 2/23rd formed in rear of the 2/24th. Enemy detachments, well handled and favoured by broken country, with machine guns, occupied ridge after ridge, and the Brigade was perpetually involved in small delaying actions, for which the nature of the country was admirably suited. The advance, therefore, was gradual, there being no necessity to risk heavy losses by a rapid advance.

After dusk the two battalions of the 231st Brigade, which had moved up in support, relieved the 2/21st south of the Tawil-Kuruntul track, thus leaving the 181st Brigade free to clear the country north of the track. By evening the Division had established a line running north from Ektief, four miles west of the cliffs overlooking Jericho.

The night of the 21st was spent consolidating the positions won, with a view to resuming the advance to the final objective in the morning.

Meanwhile the mounted troops on the right had encountered considerable opposition, and been much hampered by the difficulties of the ground. The New Zealanders were finally checked at the Wadi Muckalik by a heavy fire from Nebi Musa. At 2.30 a.m. on the 21st the London Scottish were ordered to proceed at once to Nebi Musa, which they captured without opposition about 6 a.m. A battery of the 302nd Field Artillery Brigade was ordered to proceed along the Pilgrim's Road to assist the mounted troops, but, in spite of every effort and considerable assistance from the Scottish, the difficulties of the road were so great that Nebi Musa was not reached for thirty-eight hours.

On the morning of the 21st the Division marched to its final objectives without opposition, the Turks having retired during the night all along the line.

Our line was established all along the cliffs overlooking the Jordan Valley, Rujm Esh Shemaliyeh-Kakun-Jebel Kuruntal, overlooking Jericho; and on the 22nd withdrew to the line Jebel Ektief-Talat-ed-Dumm-Ras-el-Tawil.

The Anzacs swept on to Jericho, from which they drove the Turks, pursuing them as far as the crossing of the Jordan at Ghoraniyeh.

To the south the New Zealand Mounted Rifles occupied Rujm-el-Bahr, the enemy base on the Dead Sea, which had been abandoned by the Turks, who had set fire to the store and repair shops. The acquisition of this landing place, however, was of great importance to us, in opening communications with the operation of the Sherifian Army when in the Kerak area.

On the 23rd the 179th Brigade returned to the Mount of Olives in divisional reserve.

Our casualties in the three days' fighting amounted to : 5 officers and 62 other ranks killed, 20 officers, 330 other ranks wounded, and 4 other ranks missing.

We captured 3 officers and 79 other ranks.

CHAPTER XXII

RAID ACROSS THE JORDAN

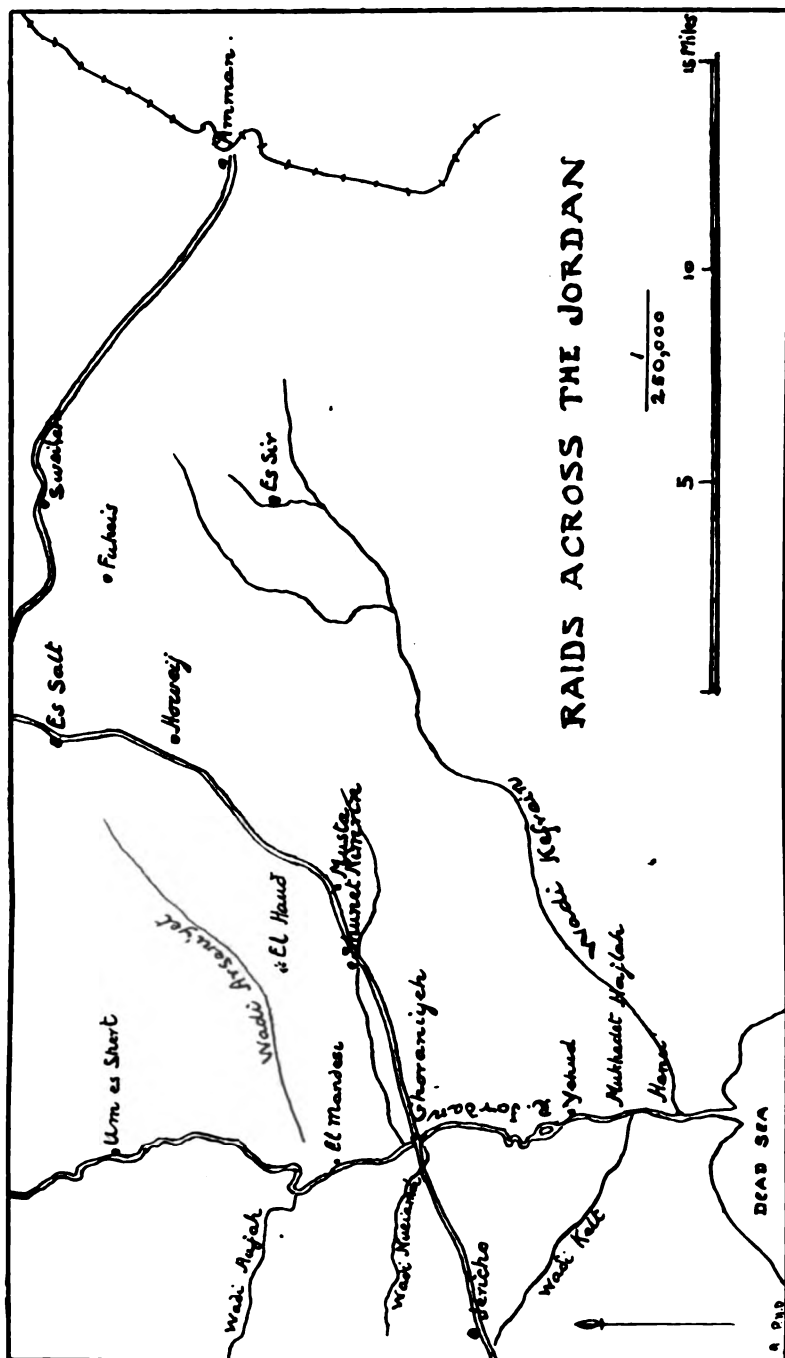
THE whole of our objectives being gained, the Division was withdrawn, and the Mounted Troops left to hold the valley. The 179th Brigade were moved on March 27th to Ras-el-Tawil, where they worked on improving the track; thence to Jebel Kuruntul: as the road progressed, so they advanced, and by March 5th they were on the hills west of Kuruntul.

The 180th Brigade were on the hills overlooking the valley from Nebi Musa, through Ektief to the northward, the 181st Brigade being moved back into reserve on the Mount of Olives.

From their positions on the summit of the lofty precipitous cliffs which rise abruptly out of the Jordan Valley, a complete view was obtainable of the whole valley from the Wadi Auja down to the Dead Sea, and any forward movement of the Turks, who held the eastern bank of the river, between these two points would have been at once apparent. The valley itself is scarcely an ideal region as regards health or climate. It is the home of malaria, while the intense heat is most enervating. The plain slopes slowly to the river, bare, except for scrub here and there, and broken by a perfect maze of sand-hills as the river is approached. The banks of the river are lined with trees and thick scrub, and afforded admirable cover for the Turkish snipers.

Orders were issued on March 1st for a careful reconnaissance of the river for two special purposes, the location of the fords, and the position of the enemy forces holding the east bank. Strong reconnaissances were carried out almost daily, which invariably drew fire from the enemy.

War against mosquitos, light training, baths, and disinfection also were included in the programme.



On the 16th orders were received for a crossing of the Jordan, on a night to be notified later.

Meanwhile, on March 6th, the London Scottish had been detached to reconnoitre the supposed ford at Mandesi. Every effort was made to find the ford, but without success ; on the 8th the reconnaissance was withdrawn, but had the misfortune to lose a party consisting of Second Lieutenant Ware and five men, who had been cut off and taken by the Turks.

A raid across the Jordan upon the enemy's line of communication in Gilead and the force engaged against Sherifian troops in the Hedjaz had been decided upon, but before it could be undertaken it was essential to broaden the base of operations, and secure the high ground covering the approaches to the Jordan Valley, and deny to the enemy all tracks leading down into the lower portion of it. This compelled an advance to the northward of some seven miles by both the XX and XXI Corps over rugged and difficult ground consisting of high rocky ridges intersected by deep valleys, and was consequently rather a slow process.

The 181st Brigade, who had been promised a good rest in reserve, soon had their period of repose broken into, and were ordered to move down again into the Jordan Valley, and form the extreme right flank of the advance, their objective being Khurbet-el-Beiyudet and Abu Tellal, north of the Wadi Aujah.

On the night of March 8th-9th the Brigade concentrated at Tel-es-Sultan, and battalions moved off to their positions for attack. The 2/24th were detailed to attack Abu Tellal, the 2/22nd and 2/21st Khurbet-el-Beiyudet, and the 2/23rd were in reserve.

The 2/24th were held up by precipitous ground near the Wadi Sabat about 5 a.m., it being impossible to find the way across in the dark. The 2/21st and 2/22nd crossed the Wadis Obeidel and Aujah, and at half-past five reported that they were ready to advance against Khurbet-el-Beiyudet.

It was impossible, however, for the 2/22nd to advance whilst enfiladed from Abu Tellal, so they were ordered to stand fast, and an Artillery bombardment of Abu Tellal was ordered for 7.45. By 7.30 the 2/24th, in spite of great difficulties, had crossed the Wadi Aujah, but were unable to reach their objectives, being held up by heavy machine-gun fire. At 12.30 p.m. Abu Tellal was again bombarded, and a company of the 2/24th, under heavy rifle fire, gained a footing on the south-east summit. The 2/23rd was brought up to assist the 2/24th, and about 2.30 the whole line advancing, carried the positions under a heavy fire; the 2/22nd, who had been under a heavy Artillery and machine-gun fire all day, evincing great dash. A party of the enemy with four machine guns who held out on a spur being driven off with heavy loss by a company of the 2/23rd. By 7 p.m. all objectives were in our hands, and our line established. The fight had been severe, and the Brigade was most ably handled by Lieutenant-Colonel Streatfield, in the absence of Brigadier-General Da Costa on leave. Our casualties were: 20 other ranks killed, and 6 officers and 78 other ranks wounded.

A special force was formed for the raid, known from the name of its commander as Shea's Group. It comprised:

The Australian and New Zealand Mounted Division.
The 60th Division.

The Imperial Camel Corps Brigade.
10th Heavy Artillery Battery, R.G.A.
9th British Mountain Artillery Brigade.
Light Armoured Car Brigade.
Army Bridging Train.
Desert Mounted Corps Bridging Train.

On March 21st Group Head-quarters, the Cavalry, and camels were at Talat-ed-Dumm, except a Brigade at Nebi Musa. The Division was in the Wadi Nueiamah, with one

Battalion of the 180th Brigade in the Wadi Kelt. The Divisional Artillery disposed to cover the proposed crossings and the bridging trains partly in the Wadi Kelt and partly near Jericho.

The reconnaissances had established the fact that the river at this time of the year was quite unfordable, and it was, therefore, decided to throw bridges across at Makhadet Hajlah and Ghoraniyeh. The 180th Brigade was detailed to force both crossings, with Artillery support, and establish bridge-heads. Feints were to be made at Aujah, Mandesi, Enkhola, Yehud and Henu fords.

First crossings were to be made by swimmers with ropes, and small rafts made by the Engineers were to be used to carry troops across to form bridge-heads on the east bank. Meanwhile bridges were to be constructed.

The 2/19th were detailed to cross at Mukhadet Hajlah and the 2/17th at Ghoraniyeh. The 2/20th to cross behind the 2/17th, and the 2/18th to support the 2/19th.

At midnight the 2/17th attempted to cross in punts, but the current was found to be very much stronger than anticipated, and the crossing by that means to be impossible. The R.E. officer in charge of the 2/17th working party was dangerously wounded, which did not help matters.

Meanwhile the 2/19th had been more successful, and their swimmers had got across, hauled over a raft, and by 1 a.m. twenty-seven men were east of the Jordan. The party who successfully carried this out were: Second Lieutenant G. E. Jones, Corporal Margrave, Lance-Corporal W. H. Henderson, Lance-Corporal Popham, Lance-Corporal Davis, Lance-Corporal Silver, and Privates Hardwick, Hoxton, Powell and Williams.

The 2/20th were now ordered to move to Makhadet Hajlah. By 5.30 a.m. the 2/19th had 300 men across, and the whole Battalion by 7.45.

The Anzac Bridging Train had already got to work on a bridge. At dawn the Turks had opened enfilade fire on the rafts, causing a good many casualties.

By 8 a.m., the first pontoon bridge being finished, the 2/18th moved across, and soon after one o'clock efforts were made to enlarge the bridge-head, but after several efforts by the two battalions it was impossible to advance beyond the dense and almost impenetrable jungle.

At 4 a.m. the Auckland Mounted Rifles began to get across the river at Hajlah, to clear the enemy out of the country on the east bank as far north as Ghoraniyeh; by noon they had succeeded in securing the ground covering that place, and capturing sixty-eight prisoners and four machine guns. The second pontoon bridge at Hajlah was completed by half-past one, and a bridge was ready at Ghoraniyeh next morning, and was used by the 181st Brigade, which, on the afternoon of the 22nd, had been ordered to make every effort to force a crossing at Ghoraniyeh. As a result of a reconnaissance it was found that the enemy's snipers and machine guns were in force on the left bank, and the Brigadier decided to mass our machine guns on the western bank so as to bring an overwhelming fire on to the enemy, and subsequently to force a crossing south of the broken bridge. The forcing of the crossing was entrusted to the 2/21st, but the current was too strong for the swimmers, who were forced back on to the western bank. Another attempt was made at 4 a.m. on the 23rd, with better success, and within two hours the whole of the 2/21st were across the river, and had formed a bridge-head without opposition.

Amman, the main objective of the raid, is about thirty miles east-north-east of Jericho. A metalled road made by the Turks existed from Ghoraniyeh bridge to Es Salt and Amman. The country traversed is flat for the first mile or so after leaving the Jordan, and becomes marshy after rain; for the next five miles or so clay ridges are met with, and the rise is some 500 feet; the country beyond is covered with scrub and intersected with numerous wadis, and in the next twelve miles rises no less than 3,500 feet till the

edge of the Moab plateau is reached. The gradients, as may be supposed, are steep, and hills themselves rocky, rugged, and covered with scrub.

At midnight of the 22nd-23rd an attack was made by the 180th Brigade on a broad front in the foothills. The 2/19th on the right, the 2/20th in the centre, the 2/18th on the left, and the 2/17th in Brigade reserve. The operation was entirely successful, the lower foothills being carried with but little opposition, and a firm bridge-head established with an excellent field of fire. On the morning of the 24th the 179th Brigade was in the Wadi Nimrin, the 180th between the 179th and Ghoraniyeh bridges, the 181st was on the right flank of the 179th along the Shunet Nimrin road, the 303rd Field Artillery Brigade, which had crossed during the night, and two Mountain Batteries supported the 181st Brigade, and one Mountain Battery the 179th Brigade.

There were two approaches to Es Salt, the main road and a track up the Wadi Arseniyet. The 181st Brigade were to advance by the former, and the 179th by the wadi. The first objective was the capture of El Haud, a position from which the road was commanded. By 3 p.m. Tel-el-Musta and El Haud had both been captured, the former by the 181st Brigade, the 2/22nd capturing three field guns, and the latter by the Scottish, who captured three officers and thirty-three other ranks, all Germans.

The capture of El Haud enabled the 181st Brigade to advance up the valley and turn the enemy's right flank, thus compelling him to retire. By dusk the Brigade had advanced up the Es Salt road to beyond Shunet Nimrin, and was in touch with the enemy astride of the road.

The 179th, pushing up the Wadi Arseniyet, a rough track made more difficult by heavy rain on the 25th, reached and occupied Es Salt on the 26th.

The 180th Brigade, on the 24th, went into Divisional reserve east of Ghoraniyeh bridge, moving up the next morning to Shunet Nimrin. Here the 2/20th remained,

the rest of the Brigade going forward to assist the 181st. On the evening of the 25th the 181st Brigade, after a very trying march, reached Es Salt ; and on the 27th two battalions of the Brigade left Es Salt for Amman, and on the following day the two remaining battalions followed them. Their place being taken by the 2/14th and 2/16th, who had gone down to El Howeij for supply purposes. The march of the 181st Brigade was delayed by an unexpected event at Sweileh. As the advanced guard of the mounted troops approached the Circassian village at Sweileh, they were joined by an excited band of two or three hundred Christian Arabs, carrying arms, from the adjacent village of El Faheis. In the face of the advanced guard the Faheis party rushed the Circassian village, and a *mêlée* ensued, accompanied by indiscriminate firing on both sides.

As the road to Amman led directly through the village of Sweileh, it was necessary not only to part the combatants, but to take measures to prevent any further disturbance which might jeopardise the communications between Es Salt and Amman.

Order was with difficulty restored, on the understanding that any Christians detained at Sweileh should be allowed to return to Faheis, and that grain should be supplied by Sweileh to the people of Faheis, who were alleged to be starving.

As a precaution one company of the 2/24th was left in the neighbourhood of Sweileh to keep the peace and protect the telegraph wires, which were repeatedly cut.

On the 28th the attack on Amman commenced. The 2/23rd on the right and the 2/21st on the left advancing about 1 p.m. against the east bank of the Wadi Amman, a deep and difficult obstacle. The advance over open and exposed ground was held up by rifle-fire to the north-west of Amman. During the afternoon the 2/17th and 2/18th were ordered up in support ; while the 2/20th and some armoured cars were sent to support the Australian Light Horse, who were also held up on the left.

The Brigade, which had been augmented by the 10th Mountain Battery and the Head-quarters 9th Mountain Artillery Brigade, advanced, with the 2/23rd on the right and the 2/20th on the left, north of, and parallel to, the Sweileh-Amman road, against the eastern bank of the Wadi Amman. The advance was over absolutely exposed ground, and for the first 1,000 yards was met with hostile Artillery fire, but was carried out with little difficulty. Farther on, however, the fire which burst upon them was intense, and the Australians being driven back, it became evident that the advance could not be continued until the heavy machine-gun fire on both flanks was silenced. On the receipt of news that the 2/22nd, with two battalions of 180th Brigade, were *en route* to reinforce from Es Salt, the Brigadier determined that any future attack should be delayed until after dark the following night.

At 5.30 p.m. enemy aeroplanes bombed Shunet Nimrin, causing heavy casualties among the camels of the 2/5th advanced dressing station.

On the 29th the enemy, who had been reinforced, tried to work round the left of the 181st Brigade, but did not succeed.

At 2 a.m. on the 30th the attack on Amman was renewed, on the left the Imperial Camel Corps captured two lines of trenches, but the 181st Brigade failed in their attack on the "Citadel," in spite of the capture of 135 prisoners and four machine guns by the 2/22nd. The 2/18th got within half a mile of the "Citadel," but were held up by a heavy frontal fire. The 2/21st were repeatedly counter-attacked, but the enemy was as often repulsed after stubborn hand-to-hand fighting. At 3 p.m. the 2/18th again attacked the "Citadel," but was checked within 400 yards of its objective by heavy machine-gun fire on its right flank.

The enemy also made attempts on our communications, a force moving to the vicinity of Kefr Huda on the 30th, about two miles north-west of Es Salt. Their attack was

defeated before night, chiefly by a brilliant flank attack by the Australian Light Horse under Colonel Bell, C.B., 120 prisoners and two machine guns were taken.

The same night the withdrawal from Amman was commenced.

The 181st Brigade, on the 31st, was ordered to withdraw by way of Sweileh and Es Sir, covered by the 2nd Australian Light Horse. On arrival at Sweileh, however, instructions were received that the Brigade was to withdraw to Ain-es-Sir instead of Es Salt. Heavy rain fell and the night was intensely cold, while the track was exceedingly difficult. At 10 p.m. all the camels of the Brigade were sent forward, while the troops rested until 2 a.m., when the withdrawal was continued.

The going was exceedingly hard and difficult, and the men were very short of sleep; in many cases no rest had been possible for forty-eight hours. During the night of the arrival at Shunet Nimrin, one battalion, the 2/21st, at a ten minutes' halt, all went to sleep, and the Commanding Officer and the Adjutant, at the head of the Battalion, woke up to find no troops at all in front of them, and finally arrived at Shunet Nimrin half an hour after the battalion in front.

At 11 a.m. the 301st Artillery Brigade, with B Battery, 303rd, took up position west of the Jordan to cover the crossing of the Divisional troops. On April 1st the 179th Brigade withdrew by the Arseniyet Wadi without incident; and on the 2nd, the 2/17th and 2/19th rejoined the 180th Brigade, forming a bridge-head, until relieved by the Australian Light Horse Brigade.

The withdrawal of the whole force, with the exception of the bridge-head troops, was completed by the evening of April 2nd without interference from the enemy.

As can be well understood the difficulties experienced by the Medical Units during the raid were very great, and the following account of the arrangements by Colonel

Dowsett are of interest. He writes : " About the middle of March all concerned were very busy with the arrangements for the forthcoming crossing of the Jordan, and the Field Ambulances began to move eastward towards Jericho. Also the 1/1st Welsh Field Ambulance of the 53rd Division came under the administration of the 60th Division on March 19th, and was made great use of subsequently as an evacuating unit in consequence of the extended route for Divisional administration. The main dressing station of the 2/4th Field Ambulance, just west of Jericho, was established, as will be seen, as a forward operating unit, and very useful indeed did it prove. With the aid of a few extra tents and marquees, and considerable initiative on the part of the Officer Commanding, Lieutenant-Colonel Layton, a real miniature hospital was established. Four iron bedsteads were procured from some of the disused hospitals in Jerusalem, and much surgical impedimenta generally. The principal interest during the actual crossing of the Jordan was the fact that many of the 180th Brigade were wounded while crossing in the small rafts, and had to be held up on the east bank for most of the day. As soon as the troops were sufficiently advanced into the hills of Moab, and the advanced dressing-station parties with them, the 2/5th Field Ambulance pushed on and formed its main dressing station at Shunet Nimrin, where it was established at three o'clock on the 20th. In Es Salt we found four private houses used as a Turkish hospital, and full of sick and wounded Turks, with one badly wounded British prisoner-of-war of the 53rd Division. The total in these four houses was ninety, and included twenty-four suffering from typhus. When I arrived to investigate these hospitals, one was firmly barricaded on the inside by patients. On making enquiries as to the reason, it appeared that all the bedding had been commandeered from the general populace in Es Salt ; and during the very short interval between the retreat of the Turks and the entry of the British, the civilian population looted the hospitals of every-

thing they could carry off, even to the bedding of the patients.

The 2/4th and 2/6th Field Ambulances advanced dressing stations commenced to evacuate these forthwith ; but this very soon had to be stopped, for events were proceeding in a very rapid and somewhat alarming manner in the north-east direction towards Amman. For a day or two the Anzac Division had been pressing forward to Amman and, at half-past six on the 28th, information was received at Divisional Head-quarters that there were 140 Anzac wounded near Amman that could not be got away. The 181st Brigade was having to help them, and at 12.30 on that day the 2/6th Field Ambulance advanced dressing station party left Es Salt with instructions to assist the evacuation of the Anzacs, and arrangements were made to send up every available sand-cart and camel for the purpose. While the 2/6th Field Ambulance were in Es Salt an incident occurred which is worth recording. Some members of the armoured cars arrived at the advanced dressing station in a box Ford car, with an unconscious moribund Turk, whom they had picked up from the roadside farther on. He turned out to be in the last stage of typhus. His zealous rescuers were informed of the nature of the case, and of the necessity for instant disinfection, also of the complete absence of any prospect of it under existing circumstances. They left with the defiled car, and a general impression that they had, with luck, about ten days to live. The Turk only survived his arrival a few hours.

The advanced dressing station party of the 2/6th Field Ambulance, which went to Amman, probably had the most hectic time of any field ambulance party of the 60th Division during the whole war. It was the only available personnel to send with the whole of the 181st Brigade right on to Amman, where very heavy casualties occurred. The responsibility and anxiety of the officer in charge, Major A. B. Pavy-Smith, was very great, for the distance from the fighting line to the nearest relay post, namely Es

Salt, was about eighteen miles, and across most appalling country, much of which was bog, the worst thing imaginable for the cacolet camels. His available transport was most inadequate for the purpose over such a long distance, and he had no knowledge as to whether further transport would be sent up to him, or, if so, whether it would ever reach him, for there were no reliable maps of the area. The actual journey from Amman to Es Salt for a convoy of camels with wounded took ten hours, so that they could not be expected back at Amman under twenty-four hours. To add to the anxiety, communication with the rear was difficult as most of the wires had been cut by the Bedouins, and Signals were relying upon wireless. One message sent off by the officer in charge went by pigeon post to Jerusalem, and was wired out again to the A.D.M.S. at Shunet Nimrin. The resource and persistence with which the party carried on under the most trying circumstances are worthy of the highest praise. Perhaps the most anxious time for the officer in charge was when the Brigadier of the 181st Brigade informed them, on the afternoon of the 31st, that the whole force was about to retire; for at the moment there were still about 160 more wounded to be collected. However, by midnight all were in, and, fortunately, more than sufficient transport arrived for them just in the nick of time, and all moved off in order with the Brigade, though subjected to heavy shelling for a time, but with only two casualties in the Field Ambulance party.

It was fortunate that the 179th Brigade had only very few casualties on the way up to Es Salt, as it would have been impossible for the 2/4th Field Ambulance advanced dressing station party to send them down the way they went up—namely, the precipitous Wadi Arseniyet. When the 2/6th Field Ambulance advanced dressing station had to move up to Amman, the 2/4th pitched its station on the main road just outside Es Salt, and thus acted as the first relay post. The C.O. of the Field Ambulance was there in person and, with his accustomed energy, carried

on night and day in a sea of mud. The weather being appalling, the road up the gorge from Shunet Nimrin to Es Salt was in an indescribable condition.

At first a motor road-head was made at El Howeij, about half-way up, but as soon as fighting began around Amman, it became apparent that the motor ambulances would have to move further up, and by dint of the greatest perseverance by all the drivers, who had to help one another to push their cars up through the mire, a motor road-head was formed at Es Salt, and, eventually another five miles beyond on the Amman road. Every driver worked like a Trojan, and for three days and nights, practically without a rest. Every available horse and mule-drawn vehicle and cacolet camel from all the Field Ambulances had to be sent up to Es Salt and Amman; so it was evident that extra motor ambulances were required. On requests being made to Head-quarters, these were very promptly sent, and at the later period, the Division had seventy-six Ford motor ambulances east of the Jordan. In addition to these, returning A.S.C. limbers and G.S. waggon were continually pressed into the service, and one seldom returned empty. The 2/5th Field Ambulance main dressing station at Shunet Nimrin did sterling work the whole time; for, not only did every case pass through their hands, but every one was redressed, fed and many operated upon. The air-raid on Shunet Nimrin on the 28th did not hit the dressing station, but several bombs dropped right in their camel lines, killing sixteen of them.

The appalling discomforts of the wounded can be appreciated when it is remembered that the whole of these operations was conducted in practically incessant rain, with little or no means of cover in the forward area, and with a scarcity of blankets in very bleak weather on the hills. Also it meant forty-eight hours for most cases before they got to Jerusalem and into a bed. One convoy of cacolet camels with wounded was coming down from Es Salt on the night of the 31st, and got completely stuck in the mud,

having to be unloaded and left there till the next morning. On a message arriving at Shunet Nimrin, food was sent up.

At midnight on April 1st, just as the main dressing station at Shunet Nimrin was cleared of its last cases, a convoy of ninety sick native refugees from Es Salt on camels arrived with all their worldly goods. There were not enough motor ambulances left to take them across the Jordan, but, fortunately, six G.S. waggons were secured from the A.S.C., and after feeding them with all the remainder of the food left in the field ambulance, they were packed off about 2 a.m.; the heaviest loaded convoy of G.S. waggons ever seen. By 4 a.m. on April 2nd all was cleared, and the Field Ambulance prepared to move back across the Jordan. Owing to the strain of the very arduous nature of the operations and the exposure to the terrible weather, as soon as the fighting was over, large numbers of sick were evacuated during the next four days. The total number evacuated by the three Field Ambulances during the period, March 22nd to April 6th, was 1,471 sick, and 988 wounded."

The Supply had also a pretty hard time during the raid, the terrible weather making transport difficult, but nevertheless the service was performed with reasonable regularity. Some notes by the Supply Officer of the 179th Brigade are of interest. He writes: "During the next few days all was preparation for the forcing of the Jordan, Soon after midday on March 23rd the bridge at Hajlah ford was completed, and about four o'clock the same afternoon my small section accompanied the first ration convoy across the river. The Brigade had crossed about an hour earlier, and had then turned due northwards; it was getting late, and the return had to be made to Jericho that evening.

"As all the Quartermasters were with me, we decided to barrack the camels and make the issue; this was at a spot rather more than a mile east of the river. Scarcely had we commenced the issue than I heard someone hailing

me ; it was the Officer Commanding the 2/19th. He imparted the pleasing information that we were half a mile beyond his outposts, but that he had advanced a platoon as a screen whilst we were at work. The next day the Brigade commenced the advance up the Wadi Arseniyet track towards Es Salt ; that night they were halted just where the wadi strikes into the foothills, and it was not until half-past ten at night that we finally reached them. There I left my Staff-Sergeant to make the issue early next morning, and returned to the Ghoraniyeh bridge-head to collect supplies for the following morning. March 25th was a day of one difficulty upon another ; I started off with a convoy from the Jordan about six in the morning, picked up my men where I had left them the previous night, and commenced the long march towards Es Salt. It rained incessantly the whole of the day, the track was narrow and extremely slippery ; camels were constantly slipping, and were either unable to rise again, unless unloaded, or, as happened in several cases, rolled with their loads to the bottom of the precipice. During the afternoon we came up with the Brigade baggage and water camels, and about dusk fell in with the Brigade small-arms ammunition convoy. The track was now absolutely impassable in places, and our only hope of pushing forward was to unload some of the camels carrying blankets ; these spread on the track gave the animals a certain amount of foothold and helped us over many bad places.

“About ten o'clock the Quartermasters, the Camel Transport Officer and myself had a short consultation, and decided to bivouac till dawn. We had picked up the Brigade wire, and one of the signallers endeavoured to tap it, but without success. Next morning the weather had cleared considerably, and we were able to make very fair progress ; we arrived about two miles from Es Salt at noon, and halted there. One day's rations were immediately issued to the Quartermasters whose units sent down the necessary transport, and the tired camels commenced their long march

back to the Jordan. That same night another day's rations arrived, this time by the main Es Salt road through Shunet Nimrin, and were immediately issued to the Brigade. On Easter Sunday, March 31st, we were holding on at Es Salt at all costs to enable the 181st Brigade to get clear of Amman. The previous evening we had entertained at the dump a large party of Turkish prisoners, including several officers. We had done everything possible to give them a meal, and the proof that this meal was appreciated was in their thanks when escort and prisoners moved on."

CHAPTER XXIII

SECOND RAID ACROSS THE JORDAN

THE raid, though it did not produce all the results which had been hoped for, nor any permanent damage to the Hedjaz railway, succeeded in drawing northwards a portion of the garrison of Maan and a considerable number of the troops who had been operating against the Arabs. This force took advantage of the situation created to harass the Turks considerably, as well as effectually destroying some 100 kilometres of the railway about 70 kilometres south of Maan.

The 179th Brigade, who had returned to Bethany on April 9th, were ordered northward to relieve a Brigade of the 10th Division on the Wadi Gharib, north of Jerusalem. The Division having received orders to relieve the 10th Division. The 180th Brigade, after spending a few days at Talat-ed-Dumm, moved up to Jerusalem on the 21st, but a few days later both Brigades were ordered down to take part in another raid on Es Salt.

The Turks after our retirement, having received considerable reinforcements from the west, who had crossed the Jordan at Jisr-ed-Damieh, reoccupied the Shunet Nimrin position, where they organised a position of considerable strength, running roughly north and south, held, for the greater part, by fresh troops, and well supplied with machine and mountain guns.

On the 11th the enemy vigorously attacked the Ghoraniyeh bridge-head, but was easily beaten off.

The object of the new raid was, if possible, to cut off and destroy this force at Shunet Nimrin ; and if successful to secure and hold Es Salt till the advancing Arab force should be in a position to take it over and relieve our force there. The Beni Sakhr tribe, who were concentrated near Madeba, undertook to co-operate, provided we moved

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before May 4th, on which date their supplies would be exhausted, and the tribe compelled to scatter.

The troops selected to carry out the raid were the 179th and 180th Brigades of the Division and the Desert Mounted Corps, less the 1st Division of the Imperial Service Cavalry.

The two Infantry Brigades were to attack Shunet Nimrin, while the mounted troops moving northwards were then to turn eastward along the tracks from Um-es-Shert and Jisr-ed-Damieh, and, while protecting the left flank of the Infantry, move on Es Salt, and sever the line of communications of the force occupying Shunet Nimrin. The only other line open to the Turks facing the Infantry was the track through Ain-es-Sir, which the Beni Sakhr tribe were to block.

On the night of April 28th-29th the 179th and the 180th Brigades concentrated in the rough jungle contained within the Ghoraniyeh bridge-head.

At 2 a.m. on the 30th the advance began, the 180th Brigade on the right and the 179th on the left, against El Haud. This being the same position as the Brigades attacked in the former raid. At dawn the foothills were reached, and it was soon evident that very serious opposition was to be encountered.

The 2/20th captured the enemy's trenches on the first crest, and pushing on were heavily counter-attacked by the enemy from the left; the counter-attack was beaten off, and one hundred prisoners captured; but further advance was held up by the heavy fire from the higher position completely dominating our line. At the same time the 2/19th, on the right, were held up, as well as the London Scottish on their left.

The Scottish, with the Westminsters on their left, in spite of a very heavy machine-gun and rifle fire gained the position on Spectacle Hill, taking seventy-six prisoners; but the enemy's fire was too heavy to permit of any further advance, and the line was held up, the Queen's Westminsters

holding the ground northwards from the base of Spectacle Hill. Repeated attempts were made to advance during the day, but all were baffled by the overwhelming machine-gun fire from the new Turkish position, that enfiladed the 2/20th line from both flanks, compelling them to withdraw behind the first crest, under cover of the 2/18th; here they held their ground till the end of the day.

Meanwhile the mounted troops had occupied Es Salt, and very nearly succeeded in capturing the Head-quarters of the IVth Turkish Army. On May 1st this force was compelled to retire, being heavily attacked by Turkish Cavalry and Infantry who had crossed the Jordan at Jisr-ed-Damieh, the 11th Australian Light Horse having failed unfortunately to capture the bridge-head there, which was very strongly defended.

The mounted troops on our left were driven back, the Brigade in Es Salt being in danger of being cut off.

During the withdrawal, the guns of two batteries had to be abandoned, as there was no track fit for wheels by which they could be got away; the personnel and the teams, however, were safely withdrawn, and fresh guns being issued, the batteries were again in action within forty-eight hours.

Meanwhile, the Beni Sakhr tribe having failed to take any action, the Es Sir route was open to the Turks, and the possibility of isolating the force at Shunet Nimrin was no longer existent.

On May 2nd a last desperate effort was made to save the situation; the Cavalry advanced from the north by the Es Salt-Shunet Nimrin road, while the Infantry again made a push from the south; but in spite of the most desperate efforts no result was attained. The Cavalry was held up at Howejj, and in spite of a heavy Artillery bombardment of the Shunet Nimrin position, an attack by the 2/18th was only partially successful, and orders were given for the withdrawal of the Cavalry, which was safely accomplished on May 3rd.

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The 181st Brigade had, in the meantime, been ordered down hurriedly to support the other two Brigades in the attack on the foothills. They accordingly crossed the Jordan, and got into position behind the other two Brigades, preparatory to launching another attack, which, however, was cancelled by the order to retire. The 181st Brigade then occupied the Ghoraniyeh bridge-head, and covered the retirement of the 179th and 180th Brigades, and the Cavalry ; and remained for nearly a month holding the position, not a pleasant quarter in the pestilential heat of the Jordan Valley in May.

The fighting throughout had been desperate, and the troops had done all that was humanly possible in the face of the heavy casualties sustained, which taxed to the utmost the powers of the stretcher bearers, who excelled themselves in their heroic efforts to succour the wounded. The 2/20th and the Scottish suffered the heaviest casualties, the former having 2 officers and 36 other ranks killed, and 5 officers and 151 other ranks wounded, with 10 other ranks missing. The Scottish casualties amounting to 3 officers and 30 other ranks killed, and 6 officers and 134 other ranks wounded—48 per cent. of their actual strength.

Among many other gallant acts, that of Private Cruikshank of the London Scottish, for which he was deservedly awarded the Victoria Cross, is worthy of note ; the incident is most graphically described by Mr. Bernard Blaser in his interesting work, *Kilts Across the Jordan*, which is not only a clear description of the incident, but brings forcibly to one's imagination the conditions with which we had to contend. He writes : " Again we tried to advance, but our endeavours were useless. In one instance the platoons had to cross a ridge, and advance up the wadi on the opposite side. They reached the ridge, but as soon as they attempted to proceed a murderous fire was opened upon them. Those who were left of the right platoon, only half of their original number succeeded in reaching the bottom, where they were comparatively safe, but the

other platoon was confronted with a precipice down which it was impossible to climb, and they were caught there in the fire from the enemy positions towering above them. The officer, Lieutenant Silver, the Sergeant, and several men were killed outright. Some of the survivors made for a small cave where they thought they would be safe, but it proved a death trap. The Turks simply fired into the mouth of the cave, and one by one the poor fellows were killed. By this time only a Lance-Corporal and nine men remained of a platoon of about thirty, and their plight seemed hopeless. The corporal asked for a volunteer to take a report back to Company Head-quarters. It was a job attended by the utmost danger, for no sooner did a man move from his little bit of cover than sure enough he attracted fire from the ever-watchful Turks. Although it meant running the gauntlet, with but a faint hope of getting through alive, one man, Private Cruikshank (the same who had such a wonderful escape at El Muntar), offered to take that chance. Both sides of the ridge were exposed to the enemy, but Cruikshank chose that down which the remnants of the other platoon had gone earlier. As soon as he moved he was greeted with a shower of bullets, one hitting him in the arm. With as much haste as the rocky nature of the ground would permit he began the descent, but fell wounded in the thigh. Getting up again, undaunted, he hobbled on, but fell an easy target to that merciless fire, and with some half-dozen more bullet wounds in his leg he lay for a few seconds panting. It would have been fatal to have lain there long, so realising this he began to roll. Over and over he went, bumping against stones and boulders, but never stopping till he reached the bottom. All the while the Turks, in their determination to destroy him, kept up a hot fire, but he was mercifully saved from further wounds. By a piece of amazing good fortune he alighted among several men of the other platoon, all wounded, who were sheltering behind a large rock. By dint of much squeezing together into one corner they made

room for him, and there they remained all the day until a party of stretcher bearers came along and carried them back to safety. For his gallantry and self-sacrifice Cruikshank won the Victoria Cross, this being the second awarded in the Battalion."

After dark on May 2nd the Scottish and the Queen's Westminsters were relieved by the Civil Service Rifles and the Kensingtons.

On May 4th the two Brigades were withdrawn west of the Jordan, covered by the 181st Brigade; the 179th moving up to Bethany, and a few days later to Ain Arik. The 180th, after bivouacking at Tel-es-Sultan moved up to Jerusalem, and two days later moved north to Ram Allah. During the raid 942 prisoners and 29 machine guns had been taken, and the Turks impressed with the idea that our ultimate advance would be by way of Es Salt and Amman. Two raids within a period of six weeks in the stifling atmosphere of the Jordan Valley, coupled with hard marching and heavy fighting, had tried the Division severely; and in accordance with the wishes of its Commander it was to enjoy a period of well-earned rest. Accordingly it was sent into Corps Reserve, and concentrated north of Jerusalem in the neighbourhood of Ram Allah and Ain Arik. Spring was beginning, and after a heavy gale with showers of sleet on May 5th, the weather became more settled. Tents were provided for all ranks, and in the beautiful and quiet surroundings the men quickly recovered from all the fatigues that their strenuous efforts for the past two months had imposed upon them.

Work and training were reduced to a minimum, while sports of all kinds became the order of the day, and the evenings were enlivened by the excellent performances of the "Barnstormers" and the "Roosters."

But, alas, a great and unexpected change was in contemplation, the days of the Division were numbered, and never again would they take to the field as a distinctly London Division. The collapse of Russia had enabled

the Germans to transfer some hundreds of thousands of men from the Eastern Front to the Western Front ; and the success of their great push, begun in March against the Vth Army, had caused a crisis which necessitated the despatch of every available man to France to cope with the new situation that had arisen. The army in Palestine was drawn upon largely for British troops ; two Divisions, the 52nd and 75th, together with the Yeomanry, were withdrawn to France ; and the divisions that remained were greatly depleted of Infantry, and their places supplied by Indian troops. From the Division seven battalions, the 2/14th, 2/15th, 2/16th, 2/17th, 2/20th, 2/23rd, and 2/24th were ordered to proceed to France ; the 2/18th and 2/21st were disbanded, leaving only the 2/13th, 2/19th, and 2/22nd Battalions, or one to each brigade. The regiments ordered home began to move about May 27th, the Indian troops to supply their places arriving later.

Strong as had always been the esprit de corps in the Division, and in spite of a feeling of sadness that must have been universal at the breaking up of an organisation that had come into being at a crisis and held together, fighting with distinction on three fronts, and the severing of many ties of friendship and true comradeship, there is no doubt that, on the whole, the move to France was popular among the departing regiments. The prospect of the possibility of leave to England from France, a privilege which had not been possible since the day the Division landed at Salonika, nearly eighteen months before, was an attraction too great to be unconsidered.

For those who remained, the period of rest was concluded. The new units coming in had, for the most part, no previous experience of active service, and training had to commence all over again. On the medical and transport and supply units this fell most heavily, as it involved a complete change of organisation, both being now organised on the Indian system.

Colonel Dowsett writes, with reference to the medical units: "With July came the reorganisation of the Field Ambulances in conformity with the rest of the Division, Indian troops being substituted, and leaving a mere sprinkling of British personnel in the medical units, which were now known as Indian Combined Field Ambulances. It was decided also that only officers with experience of Indian troops should command these new units, and so it was most unfortunate that Lieutenant-Colonel Layton, D.S.O., had to relinquish his command of the 2/4th Field Ambulance, and his place was taken by Lieutenant-Colonel White, I.M.S. The 2/4th Field Ambulance, on the change, became the 121st, the 2/5th became the 160th, and the 2/6th became the 179th Indian Combined Field Ambulances.

"The reorganisation was indeed a trying time for all concerned, most of the Indian troops sent to the Field Ambulances were very raw indeed, with practically no military knowledge or discipline, and absolutely devoid of any ideas of 'First Aid' or other medical knowledge. The stamp of man and his general ignorance made the situation look most hopeless, but all in authority got to work at once with a will, and by dint of extreme perseverance, a couple of months worked wonders, and it then looked as if some reliance could be placed upon the new personnel of the Field Ambulances, and, as events proved later, this reliance was more than justified, and the new Field Ambulances proved worthy successors to the old. Another little difficulty that gave some slight anxiety was the fact that all the Indian battalions arriving in the Division brought with them their Indian medical officers and assistant surgeons with no war experience, and these had to be trained to the ways of the Division. However, they all proved their worth, and many did brilliant work later."

On August 22nd, Lieutenant-Colonel Bridges, D.S.O., commanding the 179th Indian Combined Field Ambulance, was unfortunately drowned whilst bathing at Jaffa, being on a visit to G.H.Q. His place was filled by Lieutenant-

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Colonel W. E. C. Lunn, M.C. This created a vacancy in the command of the 160th Field Ambulance, which was filled by Lieutenant-Colonel Maddock.

The following translation of a Turkish report, captured later, shows the estimation in which the old Division was held by the enemy.

Intelligence Officer, G.H.Q.,
VIIth Turkish Army,
No. 1753.

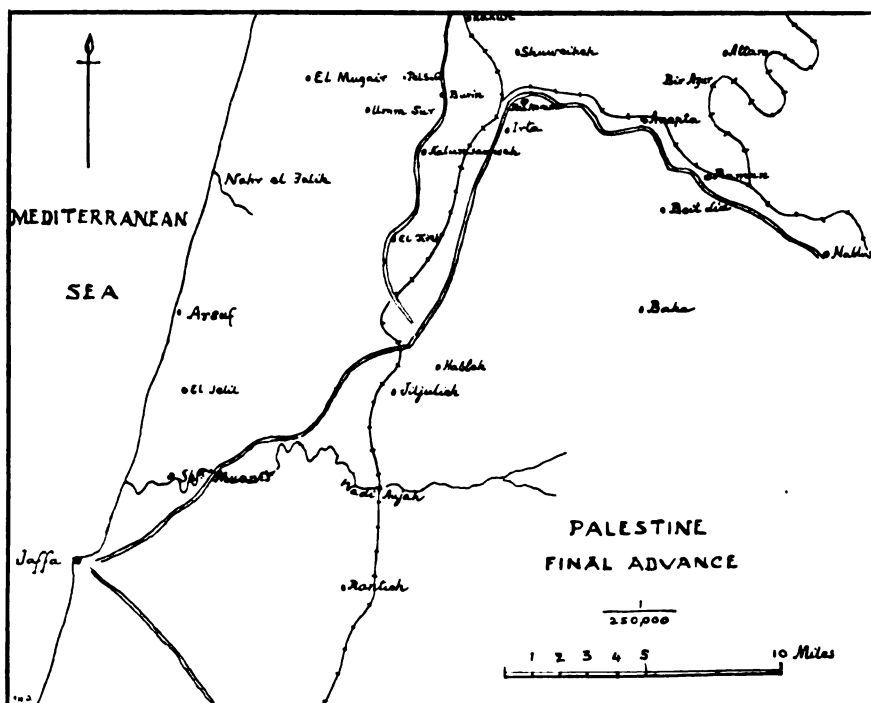
Army Head-quarters, 8/8/18.

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Interrogation of a lance-corporal of the 2/19th London Regiment, 180th Brigade, 60th Division, captured 1½ Km. north-west of Sinjil on the morning of 1/8/18.

Personal.

Prisoner is a clerk from London, moderately intelligent. Like all Londoners of the 60th Division he is very reticent in his statements. This reflects the fine spirit prevalent in the Division.



CHAPTER XXIV

THE FINAL ADVANCE

BY the beginning of September the reorganisation and training of the Division was complete, and it was once more fit to take the field. Under the new arrangements the Infantry brigades were organised as follows :—

179th Brigade. Commander : Brigadier-General Humphreys, D.S.O.

- 2/13th Battalion London Regiment.
- 2/19th Punjabis.
- 2/127th Baluch Light Infantry.
- 3/151st Punjabi Rifles.
- 179th Light Trench Mortar Battery.

180th Brigade. Commander : Brigadier-General Watson, C.M.G., D.S.O.

- 2/19th Battalion London Regiment.
- 1/50th Kumaon Rifles.
- 180th Light Trench Mortar Battery.

181st Brigade. Commander : Brigadier-General Da Costa, C.M.G., D.S.O.

- 2/22nd Battalion London Regiment.
- 1/30th Baluchis.
- 2/97th Deccan Infantry
- 2/152nd Punjabis.
- 181st Light Trench Mortar Battery.

The Commander-in-Chief had now completed his arrangements for a final advance and complete overthrow of the Turks, for which he relied mainly on the very

considerable preponderance of mounted troops at his disposal.

The Turkish troops, who covered the line from the sea to the Jordan, and beyond, did not extend to a depth of more than twelve miles at the utmost, and the reserves behind them were practically a negligible quantity : consequently it was obvious that could a gap be forced in the line, through which the Cavalry could pass, the enemy's communications could be raided and his line of retreat cut off. The three vital points in the Turkish communications were El Afula, Beisan and Deraa. The last, far away beyond the Jordan to the north-east, was beyond the reach of any but the Arab Army ; the other two, however, were most vulnerable once the Infantry had broken the enemy's defensive system and the cavalry could be loosed.

To carry this out the Commander-in-Chief determined that the main attack should be made in the coastal area. The full achievement of the scheme depended upon a rapid success, which was far more likely of attainment in the flat coastal area than over the steep and rugged hills inland north of Jerusalem, where the ground afforded a succession of positions of great natural strength, which would compel a much slower rate of advance with, in all probability, a much greater proportion of casualties.

The task of breaking through the enemy's coastal defences was entrusted to General Bulfin with the XXI Corps ; and the 60th Division with the 5th Australian Light Horse, some mountain and heavy batteries, a pontoon section, and the French detachment were sent over as a reinforcement. His orders were to break through between the railway and the sea, thus opening a road for the Cavalry, and at the same time to seize the foothills south-east of Jiljulieh. His Corps was then to swing to the right on the line Hableh-Tul Keram and, advancing in a north-easterly direction, drive the enemy into the arms of the Cavalry, who, having passed through the gap made by the Infantry, would have reached El Afula.

The XX Corps, meanwhile, was to advance east of the Bireh-Nablus road, blocking the tracks leading down to the lower Jordan Valley.

A mixed force, under General Sir E. Chaytor, was, at the same time, to demonstrate towards Amman, to encourage the enemy's belief that our main attack would be made in that direction.

Complete secrecy being the main element of success, the concentration was carried out by night, and every possible precaution taken to prevent the Turks gaining any suspicion of our intentions.

The Division left the neighbourhood of Ram Allah on the night of September 13th and marched to their concentration area, fifty-four miles distant, arriving there on the 18th, on which day the concentration was completed. All the marches were carried out during darkness, in rather trying weather, and during the day the troops were concealed, sometimes in standing camps and sometimes in orange groves, to escape observation by the enemy.

The task allotted to the Division was to establish a bridge-head, at the earliest possible moment, north of Nahr-el-Falik, to let the Cavalry through, and afterwards to capture Tul Keram, cutting the railway.

During the night of the 18th-19th the Royal Air Force bombed the Turkish Head-quarters at Nablus and Tul Keram, and at 4.30 a.m. the Artillery, assisted by two destroyers off the coast, opened an intense bombardment, under cover of which the Infantry advanced. The attack of the Division was made by the 180th Brigade, with the 181st in close support and the 179th in reserve at Arsuf.

The assault commenced at 4.30 a.m., and was attended with rapid success. It was formed in two columns; the 2nd Guides, forming the left column, captured the first strong post at once, taking fifty prisoners and two machine guns; and at 5.10 the second line was taken with fifty more prisoners, and at 5.40 the enemy's third line was won, the Turks retreating hastily. The 2/19th now pushed

through in close pursuit, and by 6.50 the left column had established a bridge-head at Nahr-el-Falik, capturing two 5.9 guns. The right column, who met with more resistance, gained their objectives later, capturing two 4.2 guns.

The 2/30th Punjabis, having meanwhile cleared the ground of obstacles, the Cavalry pushed through.

The Kumaon Rifles, attacking on the right, carried their objectives by 5 a.m., killing a large number of the enemy and taking 215 prisoners and 14 machine guns. Reorganising, they attacked again, captured another strong point, and cutting off a considerable number of the enemy, succeeded in securing another 89 prisoners. At 6.15 a.m. the 181st Brigade advanced in close support of the 180th, and the 179th moved forward to our old front line.

The Artillery moved forward as soon as the barrage programme had been completed.

At 10 a.m. the situation was much as follows : The 180th Brigade was reorganising at Nahr-el-Falik, where the bridge-head was firmly established ; two brigades of the 5th Cavalry Division having already crossed and moved some distance to the north. The 181st Brigade, supported by the 301st Brigade of Field Artillery, was advancing on Umm Sur, and the 179th approaching Nahr-el-Falik with orders to follow the 181st Brigade.

The 181st Brigade, after a rest, moved forward on Tel Subik, which they reached about 2 p.m. The 2/22nd being unopposed, reached Burin ahead of the 130th Baluchis, who were directed on Kulunsaweh and Tul Keram. Kulunsaweh was occupied about 5 p.m.

The 75th and 7th Meerut Divisions, on the right, had meantime gained their objectives ; the 75th Division capturing El Tireh about 11 a.m. after a stubborn resistance.

The 2/22nd and 2/152nd Punjabis captured Tul Keram and Irtah about 5 p.m., cutting off the enemy troops proceeding eastwards, and capturing seven 77 mm. guns. The 2/22nd then took up an outpost line covering Tul

Keram, with the 130th Baluchis in support, the 2/97th going into brigade reserve, with the 301st Field Artillery Brigade covering the outpost line.

The 180th Brigade having reorganised and rested, moved on Burin about midday, bivouacking there about 5 p.m. The 179th Brigade, having rested, moved on Kulunsaweh, bivouacking there for the night at 6 p.m.

The Turkish forces in front of the Division and a great part of the line became thoroughly disorganised by the loss of their positions during the morning, and as the attack proceeded, during the afternoon, disorganised bodies were observed streaming across the plain towards Tul Keram, in front of the Division and the Australian Light Horse. In Tul Keram itself the utmost confusion prevailed, and bodies of troops, with guns and transport of every description, were seen endeavouring to escape along the road to Nablus; attacks of the Royal Air Force adding to the panic and confusion. Later on in the evening, the Australians having succeeded in seizing a hill four miles east of Tul Keram, overlooking and commanding the road, succeeded in capturing a considerable amount of transport and a good many guns.

The success of the first day's fighting was almost phenomenal; every objective had been carried ahead of the scheduled time. The main object, the forcing of a gap to let the Cavalry through, had been carried out with an almost superhuman rapidity; by 7.30 a.m. the mounted troops were through, and by noon had reached a point eighteen miles in advance of our original front. The whole objective that the Division had set out to capture was in our hands, and the Division was finally established on the line Tul Keram-Burin-Kulunsaweh. During the day the three brigades, with their first line transport and in full fighting kit, had marched between sixteen and eighteen miles under a boiling sun, two of them having had to fight their way over a considerable part of the distance. One thousand two hundred and eighty prisoners,

including a considerable number of Germans, nineteen guns, twenty-nine machine guns, and a large quantity of material had been captured. It was a splendid record, and as General Shea says in his despatch: "Thanks to the devotion of officers and their men on this day the new 60th Division 'found itself.'"

On the morning of the 20th the 180th Brigade moved from Burin to divisional reserve west of Tul Keram Station. The 179th Brigade moved at dawn against Anepta, which they captured, taking sixty prisoners and two machine guns. In the evening they extended their right to the railway tunnel at Bir Asar, which was found intact and unguarded; but thirty boxes of gelignite were discovered at the southern end and removed.

The rest of the Division moved up the Tul Keram-Nablus road, and though they encountered no serious fighting, were engaged all day with enemy rear-guards. By evening they had secured the line Baka-Beit Lid-Massudieh Station-Attara.

On the morning of the 21st the 179th Brigade moved from Anepta to Ramin with orders to develop all the water in that district and to be prepared to move on Jenin to join up with the Australian Mounted Division.

The 180th Brigade moved up from Tul Keram to Anepta and took over the observation posts and tunnel guard from the 179th. The 181st remained where they were clearing the Anepta road of Turkish debris. Divisional Head-quarters moved from Tul Keram to Anepta.

On the following day, September 22nd, the 179th Brigade group moved back to Anepta, the 180th from Anepta to Shuweikeh, and the 181st to Kakon, where it was made responsible for the escort, from Kerkur to Tul Keram, of 1,200 prisoners taken by the Desert Mounted Corps.

Within the next day or two the whole Division was concentrated in the area Iktabi-Shuweikeh-Kakon-Burin,

with Head-quarters at Shuweikeh. From September 19th to the 23rd the Division had taken prisoners 289 officers and 4,786 other ranks, several guns, machine guns, and an immense amount of material ; and had suffered casualties, British and Indian, to the amount of 5 officers and 58 other ranks killed, 16 officers and 438 other ranks wounded, and 43 other ranks missing.

The rapidity of the advance had taxed the powers of transport and supply to a considerable degree, and the following notes by Captain Rogers, the supply officer of the 179th Brigade, provide an interesting insight into their troubles :

“ On the afternoon of September 18th supplies were picked up at the rail-head at Sheik Muannis, and carried to a point between the village of El Jelil and the coast, where they were issued about midnight ; the empty waggons of the train then left for the rail-head at El Jelil, where they were to pick up supplies for the following day. A line just south of the El Jelil rail-head had to be crossed by 2 a.m. on the 19th, in order to allow free passage for a considerable body of cavalry. We parked at El Jelil, but little realised how close we were to the gun positions ; many of us lay down and went to sleep for such short time as could be spared, but at dawn a tremendous bombardment opened on all sides of us and the mules began to stampede ; this bombardment only lasted for about twenty minutes, and died away as suddenly as it had started ; about 10 a.m. we loaded up supplies, but did not move off till about 2.30 p.m. Our instructions were to make up the coastal road past Arsuf and then strike eastward towards El Tireh ; all the way we encountered heavy sand, and our experiences that night were much the same as they had been almost a year previously at Abu Galyun. In this manner we progressed the whole night at a snail's pace ; waggons had to be dragged out of the heavy sand, and it usually took eight or ten mules to accomplish this. Several times that night we halted for an hour or so to give the

tired animals a rest, and we were only too glad of this opportunity of a rest for ourselves. About 7.30 a.m. on the 20th we halted somewhere in the neighbourhood of Kulunsaweh, and shortly afterwards I went forward with my section to try and locate the Brigade. Here I discovered the Quartermaster's party of the 2/13th, and was told that the Brigade had pushed forward to Tul Keram and was making towards Anepta. I also fell in with the Staff-Captain of the Divisional Artillery, who took me up to Divisional Head-quarters in his car; here I waited till the arrival of Train Head-quarters late that afternoon. By this time the loads on the supply waggons had been considerably lightened and a portion of them transferred to camels. The former were brought up to Tul Keram and the latter dumped in the neighbourhood of Kulunsaweh. A fresh camel transport company had reported at that village, and here at 7 p.m. I picked up the major portion of our supplies for the next day. We then started off after the Brigade, passing through Tul Keram and along what has come to be only too truly known as 'The Valley of Death'; in the moonlight it presented a most eerie spectacle of death and desolation; on all sides were dead Turks, horses and bullocks, scuppered transport, waggons of every description and all kinds of camp impedimenta, showing how complete had been the Turkish rout. We reached Brigade Head-quarters about half an hour after midnight and, needless to say, everybody had sought a well-earned rest. I must say that the temptation to do the same after three days and three nights at work or in the saddle practically the whole time was very great. . . .

" . . . Four times during the night, or the early morning, our instructions to go forward or return to Anepta were altered, and about 10 a.m. on the morning of Sunday, the 22nd, we had reached the farthest point of our advance, for the final order had been given that we were to return to Anepta that afternoon. The condition of the road

between Anepta and Ramin was even worse than the earlier stage from Tul Keram ; the weather was extremely hot and the stench was almost intolerable ; certainly some small attempt at burial had been made by the villagers, but only under considerable pressure from our own commanders. That night we bivouacked at Anepta, moved back to Tul Keram the following day, and on the 25th reached Rantieh."

The medical arrangements which promised to present some difficulties owing to the possibility of a long running fight of about eighteen miles to Tul Keram, which at a certain stage would render it impossible to carry the wounded back, owing to the distance and the difficult condition of the country, were altogether simplified by our rapid success, which rendered possible the carrying forward of the wounded from a certain point to Tul Keram. Everything worked according to plan without a hitch. A number of sick and wounded Turks were brought into the 121st Indian Combined Field Ambulance, which was established as a main dressing station in Tul Keram, among them a German officer with his throat cut—as Colonel Dowsett says : "A somewhat significant commentary on the known hatred of the Turk for the German officers in this area."

The total casualties collected and evacuated by the Field Ambulance numbered : British and Indians, 589 wounded and 412 sick ; and Turkish prisoners, 198 wounded and 5 sick, a total of 1,294.

The following message was received from the Corps Commander on September 19th :

"The Corps Commander congratulates the whole of your Division on their brilliant operations to-day, which have resulted in 4,000 prisoners passed through the cage, and at least 50 guns."

In promulgating the above the Divisional Commander added : "In communicating the above, the Divisional Commander wishes most heartily to congratulate all ranks.

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He thanks them for their fine spirit, their determination, and their wonderful endurance.

“The Division has now a record of which it can justly be proud. The devotion of officers and men has created a new 60th Division, which is a fitting successor to the Division which captured Jerusalem ”

CHAPTER XXV

CONCLUSION

HERE the history of the Division, to all intents and purposes, ends. In army reserve it had no further concern with the campaign. The organised resistance of the enemy was completely broken up ; the last stand made by the Turkish Infantry was on our right flank, where the 53rd Division were severely counter-attacked and held up for a time, our advanced troops being even driven back a little way. But the position was quickly cleared up by the 160th Trench Mortar Battery Company of the 53rd Division, and the remainder of the campaign was purely a Cavalry pursuit. How they nearly captured Liman von Sanders himself in Nazareth, swept all before them, reaching Damascus and then pushed on to Aleppo, utterly destroying the whole Turkish Army, are matters of common history, and do not concern the work of the Division ; except the fact, that must never be forgotten, that they took a leading part in opening the door, through which the Cavalry passed to carry out their wonderful and historic ride which concluded the campaign.

On November 2nd the Division moved to near Ludd, and on the 9th commenced to move down to Kantara, and a fortnight later concentrated about Alexandria, where disembodiment commenced, finally ceasing to exist on March 7, 1919.

Here the history of the Division ends. With the seven battalions who left for France in May 1918, this history has no further concern, they all became units of other divisions and finished their work driving the Germans out of France. Those interested can follow their careers in other histories, but it may not be out of place to record the fact that they carried the spirit of the old Division

with them, and did their duty in France as eagerly and determinedly as they had done it in Palestine.

It was only fitting, perhaps, that the last fight of the Division should have been fraught with far greater results than any other in which they had been engaged. They had made themselves a history throughout the campaign, a campaign which was no mere side-show, but one which, when viewed in its proper perspective, shows results of the highest importance, and which probably had a greater effect on the final climax than most people are prepared to admit.

In the first place it laid for ever the bogey of German domination in the East, rendering impossible the campaign planned for the recapture of Baghdad by the Yilderim Army. It completely wiped the Turks off the slate and restored the blessings of civilisation and good government to a country that for upwards of four hundred years had had to submit to the abominations of Turkish misrule. And every man who took part in the campaign should have a feeling of pride in the fact that he was one of those privileged to assist in the great work of restoring liberty and decent government to a downtrodden people, wellnigh ruined by robbery and extortion. While this feeling of pride should be general among those who took part in the conquest, it does not seem unreasonable to suggest that those who fought with the old Division are entitled, perhaps, to a special pride for their share of the work. Where the conduct of all was so meritorious it may seem a trifle boastful to single out the work of any one Division for special praise—and no boastful spirit ever existed in the Division—but one fact cannot be overlooked, the Division was invariably selected for the roughest jobs, and therefore it may be allowable to presume that those in authority had faith in them. Never was this more highly exemplified than when General Bulfin applied for their attachment to his Corps in the last great fight, and placed upon their shoulders a leading part in the great drama—the

opening of the gate which was to lead to the destruction of the whole Turkish Army. He had trained and commanded them, and though they had recently undergone a great change of personnel, he had faith that the spirit with which he had imbued them was still existent. That he was justified in his belief must have made him proud, and is to the everlasting glory of the Division. His parting message to the Division on September 23rd runs as follows :

“ I cannot allow the 60th Division to leave my Corps without again thanking you for all the good work you have done while under my command. On the morning of September 19th you forced the passage of the Falik and established your covering bridge-head and enabled the 5th Cavalry Division to pass north, through the passage you had made for them. You then, on the same day, performed a rapid march of eighteen miles across the deep sand under a hot sun and fought your way into Tul Keram, capturing several hundred prisoners, guns, and material, and pushed out your defences.

“ The old 60th had a high reputation, the new 60th have fully maintained that reputation, and added to it by their brilliant performance on September 19th, which called for endurance, determination, and military knowledge, enabling the Cavalry to start before the time expected, which resulted in far distant objectives being reached.

“ I thank you all for your great and valuable help, and wish you all good luck and an early and safe return to your homes, happy in the knowledge that your work has been well done.”

Sir John Shea, in his farewell order, gives a brief sketch of the work of the Division, in the command of which he proved himself such an able successor of General Bulfin ; and his approbation of its work, shortly but pointedly expressed, should be highly valued by all who had the honour of serving under him.

His farewell order runs :

"The 60th (London) Division will shortly cease to exist as such, and it is with a deep feeling of personal sorrow that I bid farewell to the officers and men who have served in it, and who, by their undaunted spirit, their self-sacrifice, and their heroism, built it up to its present proud position.

"The Division left England for France in June 1916, and in December of the same year was transferred to Salonika, where it engaged in operations near Doiran.

"In June 1917 the Division was again transferred, this time to Egypt, and shortly after was chosen to be the Right Flank Division of the XX Corps in the advance northwards from Gaza and Beersheba.

"Hill 1070 (near Beersheba) and Sherria fell to the Division in rapid succession, and the advance was continued to Nebi Samwil, despite all the difficulties of country, weather, and improvised transport.

"On December 7, 1917, the precipitous defences covering Jerusalem were stormed under the worst possible conditions of cold and rain, and on December 9th the Division had the signal honour of accepting the surrender of Jerusalem.

"The Division then took a prominent part in the capture of Jericho, and subsequently was twice engaged east of the Jordan.

"In May 1918, owing to the grave situation in France, the Division was reorganised on a mixed British and Indian basis. Seven battalions were sent to France, where they nobly upheld the name and traditions of the 60th (London) Division, and two battalions were disbanded to furnish drafts. Nine Indian battalions, many of which had been hastily raised, completed the Division to its full establishment by July 31, 1918. Six weeks later, after one month of intensive training, during which all ranks gave ungrudgingly of their best, the Division marched out of the Ram Allah area, north of Jerusalem, to take part in the

operations culminating in the complete destruction of the Turkish Army.

“The front of the attack allotted, on the seacoast, involved an approach march of fifty-four miles from the Ram Allah area, carried out entirely during the hours of darkness in full fighting kit.

“On September 19, 1918, the Division stormed three lines of the Turkish trench system and opened a road for the Cavalry to debouch northwards and to get astride of the Turkish communications.

“A rapid march was then performed across deep sand and under a hot sun, and Tul Keram captured the same evening at 5 p.m. Twenty miles were covered in twelve and a half hours in face of continued opposition. After a few days of desultory fighting and outpost duties, the Division was withdrawn and remained in reserve until the signing of the Armistice. I feel that I cannot adequately express my pride in having commanded such a Division, nor my deep sense of obligation to all ranks.

“I tender you my most heartfelt thanks, with the earnest wish that you may have a safe and happy return to your homes, and a future that shall be a fitting reward for your brilliant and devoted service during the war.”

APPENDIX I

60TH (LONDON) DIVISION

COMMANDS AND STAFF—JUNE 1916

G.O.C. Major-Gen. E. S. Bulfin, C.B., C.V.O.
G.S.O. 1. Lt.-Col. E. T. Humphreys, D.S.O.
G.S.O. 2. Capt. C. A. Bolton.
G.S.O. 3. Capt. G. R. V. Hume-Gore, M.C.
A.A. and Q.M.G. Lt.-Col. P. Malcolm, D.S.O., M.V.O.
D.A.A.G. Major H. W. McCall.
D.A.Q.M.G. Major B. B. Barrett, M.C., R.A.S.C.

C.R.A. Brig.-Gen. H. Simpson-Baikie, C.B.
Bde.-Major (R.A.). Major C. N. Prance, D.S.O.
Staff-Capt. Capt. G. Fison.
C.R.E. Lt.-Col. R. Q. Henriques.
A.D.M.S. Col. E. B. Dowsett.
D.A.D.M.S. Major Fegen.
O.C. Divisional Train. Col. P. H. Dalbiac, C.B., T.D.
S.S.O. Major Murdoch.

179TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

Cmdg. Brig.-Gen. E. W. D. Baird.
Bde.-Major. Major W. N. Herbert, D.S.O.
Staff-Capt. Capt. K. E. Hart.
O/C 2/13th Btn. London Regt., Lt.-Col. C. Mackenzie.
O/C 2/14th „ „ Lt.-Col. R. Dunsmore, T.D.
O/C 2/15th „ „ Lt.-Col. C. De Putron.
O/C 2/16th „ „ Lt.-Col. C. A. Gordon-Clark.

240 HISTORY OF THE 60TH DIVISION

180TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

Cmdg. Brig.-Gen. Herbert W. Studd, D.S.O.

Bde.-Major. Capt. A. O. Oppenheim.

Staff-Capt. Capt. H. Garton Ash.

O/C 2/17th Btn. London Regt., Lt.-Col. R. M. Birkett.

O/C 2/18th „ „ Lt.-Col. W. H. Murphy, D.S.O.

O/C 2/19th „ „ Lt.-Col. D. Sword.

O/C 2/20th „ „ Lt.-Col. W. St. A. Warde-Aldam.

181ST INFANTRY BRIGADE

Cmdg. Brig.-Gen. C. McN. Parsons, C.B.

Bde.-Major. Capt. J. N. Horlick, M.C.

Staff-Capt. Capt. B. M. Edwards.

O/C 2/21st Btn. London Regt., Lt.-Col. B. Fletcher.

O/C 2/22nd „ „ Lt.-Col. C. A. Luck.

O/C 2/23rd „ „ Lt.-Col. H. S. J. Streatfield.

O/C 2/24th „ „ Lt.-Col. J. P. G. Crosbie.

FIELD AMBULANCES

O/C 2/4th, Lt.-Col. T. B. Layton.

O/C 2/5th, Lt.-Col. R. Corfe.

O/C 2/6th, Lt.-Col. J. W. Bird, D.S.O.

ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY

O/C 301st Brigade., Lt.-Col. Thatcher.

O/C 302nd „ „ Lt.-Col. Drake.

O/C 303rd „ „ Lt.-Col. N. Bayley.

A.D.V.S. Lt.-Col. Lane.

APPENDIX II

60TH (LONDON) DIVISION

COMMANDS AND STAFF—OCTOBER 1917

- G.O.C.* Major-Gen. J. S. M. Shea, C.B., C.M.G., D.S.O.
G.S.O. 1. Lt.-Col. A. C. Temperley, D.S.O.
G.S.O. 2. Major J. Gurdon, D.S.O.
G.S.O. 3. Capt. G. R. V. Hume-Gore, M.C.
A.A. and Q.M.G. Lt.-Col. H. W. McCall, D.S.O.
D.A.A.G. Major J. S. Courtauld, M.C.
D.A.Q.M.G. Major Carter.
- C.R.A.* Brig.-Gen. W. A. Robinson, C.B., C.M.G.
Bde.-Major (R.A.). Major A. C. Prance, D.S.O.
Staff-Capt. Capt. G. Fison, M.C.
- C.R.E.* Lt.-Col. A. J. Bird, D.S.O.
A.D.M.S. Col. E. B. Dowsett, D.S.O.
D.A.D.M.S. Major Price-Harris.
O.C. Divisional Train. Lt.-Col. J. G. Needham, D.S.O.
S.S.O. Major Ball.

179TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

- Cmdg.* Brig.-Gen. Fitz. J. M. Edwards, C.B., C.M.G.
Bde.-Major. Capt. G. Sherston.
Staff-Capt. Capt. H. V. Bevington, M.C.
O/C 2/13th Btn. London Regt., Lt.-Col. C. Mackenzie, D.S.O.
O/C 2/14th „ „ Lt.-Col. R. J. L. Ogilby, D.S.O.
O/C 2/15th „ „ Lt.-Col. T. Bisdee, M.C.
O/C 2/16th „ „ Lt.-Col. C. A. G. Gordon-Clark,
D.S.O.

180TH INFANTRY BRIGADE

Cmdg. Brig.-Gen. C. F. Watson, C.M.G., D.S.O.*Bde.-Major.* Capt. R. V. Read, D.S.O., M.C.*Staff-Capt.* Capt. G. Cooper-Willis, M.C.

O/C 2/17th Btn. London Regt., Lt.-Col. H. J. Dear, D.S.O.

O/C 2/18th „ „ Lt.-Col. A. E. Norton, D.S.O.

O/C 2/19th „ „ Lt.-Col. D. Sword.

O/C 2/20th „ „ Lt.-Col. W. St. A. Warde-Aldam,
D.S.O.

181ST INFANTRY BRIGADE

Cmdg. Brig.-Gen. E. C. Da Costa, C.M.G., D.S.O.*Bde.-Major.* Capt. B. Edwards.*Staff-Capt.* Capt. C. H. A. French, M.C.

O/C 2/21st Btn. London Regt., Lt.-Col. J. A. Jervois, M.C.

O/C 2/22nd „ „ Lt.-Col. A. D. Norton, V.C.,
C.M.G., D.S.O.O/C 2/23rd „ „ Lt.-Col. H. S. J. Streatfield,
D.S.O.

O/C 2/24th „ „ Lt.-Col. J. P. G. Crosbie, D.S.O.

FIELD AMBULANCES

O/C 2/4th Lt.-Col. T. B. Layton.

O/C 2/5th Lt.-Col. W. A. Lunn, M.C.

O/C 2/6th Lt.-Col. J. W. Bird, D.S.O.

ROYAL FIELD ARTILLERY

O/C 301st Brigade, Lt.-Col. Thatcher.

O/C 302nd „ Lt.-Col. Ferguson.

O/C 303rd „ Lt.-Col. N. Bayley.

A.D.V.S. Lt.-Col. Dale.

APPENDIX III

SPECIAL ORDER OF THE DAY

G.H.Q., E.E.F.,

December 15, 1917.

WITH the capture of JERUSALEM another phase of the operations of the Egyptian Expeditionary Force has been victoriously concluded.

The Commander-in-Chief desires to thank all ranks of all the units and services in the Force for the magnificent work which has been accomplished.

In forty days many strong Turkish positions have been captured, and the Force has advanced some sixty miles on a front of thirty miles.

The skill, gallantry, and determination of all ranks have led to this result.

1. The approach marches of the Desert Mounted Corps and the XX Corps (10th, 53rd, 60th, and 74th Divisions), followed by the dashing attacks of the 60th and 74th Divisions, and the rapid turning movement of the Desert Mounted Corps, ending in the fine charge by the 4th Australian Light Horse Brigade, resulted in the capture of BEERSHEBA with many prisoners and guns.

2. The stubborn resistance of the 53rd Division, units of the Desert Mounted Corps and Imperial Camel Brigade in the difficult country north-east of BEERSHEBA, enabled the preparations of the XX Corps to be completed without interference, and enabled the Commander-in-Chief to carry out his plan without diverting more than the intended number of troops to protect the right flank, despite the many and strong attacks of the enemy.

3. The attacks of the XX Corps (10th, 60th, and 74th Divisions), prepared with great skill by the Corps and Divisional Commanders, and carried out with such dash and courage by the troops, resulted in the turning of the Turkish left flank, and in an advance to a depth of nine miles through an entrenched position defended by strong forces.

In this operation the Desert Mounted Corps, covering the right flank and threatening the Turkish rear, forced the Turks to begin a general retreat on their left flank.

4. The X Artillery attack of the XI Corps, and of the ships of the Royal Navy, skilfully arranged and carried out with great accuracy, caused heavy loss to the enemy in the GAZA sector of his defences. The success of this bombardment was due to the loyal co-operation of the Rear-Admiral S.N.O. Egypt and Red Sea and officers of the Royal Navy, the careful preparation of plans by the Rear-Admiral and the G.O.C. XXI Corps, and the good shooting of the Royal Navy, and of the heavy, siege, and field artillery of the XXI Corps.

5. The two attacks on the strong defences of GAZA, carried out by the 52nd and 54th Divisions, were each completely successful, thanks to the skill with which they were thought out and prepared by the G.O.C. XXI Corps, the Divisional Commanders, and the Brigade Commanders, and the great gallantry displayed by the troops who carried out these attacks.

6. The second attack resulted in the evacuation of GAZA by the enemy and the turning of his right flank. The 52nd and 75th Divisions at once began a pursuit which carried them in three weeks from GAZA to within a few miles of JERUSALEM.

7. This pursuit, carried out by the Desert Mounted Corps and these two Divisions of the XXI Corps, first over the sand-hills of the coast, then over the plains of PALESTINE and the foothills, and finally in the rocky mountains of JUDEA, required from all Commanders rapid decisions and powers to adapt their tactics to varying conditions of ground. The troops were called upon to carry out very long marches in great heat without water, to make attacks on stubborn rear-guards without time for reconnaissance, and finally to suffer cold and privation in the mountains.

In these great operations Commanders carried out their plans with boldness and determination, and the troops of all arms and services responded with a devotion and gallantry beyond praise.

8. The final operations of the XX Corps, which resulted in the surrender of JERUSALEM, were a fitting climax to the efforts of all ranks.

The attack, skilfully prepared by the G.O.C. XX Corps, and carried out with precision, endurance, and gallantry by the troops of the 53rd, 60th, and 74th Divisions, over country of extreme difficulty, in wet weather, showed skill in leading and gallantry and determination of a very high order.

9. Throughout the operations the Royal Flying Corps have rendered valuable assistance to all arms, and have obtained complete mastery of the air. The information obtained from contact and

reconnaissance patrols has at all times enabled Commanders to keep in close touch with the situation. In the pursuit, they have inflicted severe loss on the enemy ; and their Artillery co-operation has contributed in no small measure to our victory.

10. The organisation in rear of the fighting forces enabled these forces to be supplied throughout. All Supply and Ammunition Services and Engineer Services were called upon for great exertions. The response everywhere showed great devotion and high military spirit.

11. The thorough organisation of the Lines of Communication, and the energy and skill with which all the services adapted themselves to the varying conditions of the operations, ensured the constant mobility of the fighting troops.

12. The Commander-in-Chief appreciates the admirable conduct of all the Transport Services, and particularly the endurance and loyal service of the Camel Transport Corps.

13. The skill and energy by which the Signal Service was maintained under all conditions reflects the greatest credit on all concerned.

14. The Medical Service was able to adapt itself to all the difficulties of the situation, with the result that the evacuation of wounded and sick was carried out with the least possible hardship or discomfort.

15. The Veterinary Service worked well throughout, the wastage in animals was consequently small considering the distances traversed.

16. The Ordnance Service never failed to meet all demands.

17. The work of the Egyptian Labour Corps has been of the greatest value in contributing to the rapid advance of the troops, and in overcoming the difficulties of the communications.

18. The Commander-in-Chief desires that his thanks and appreciation of their services be conveyed to all officers and men of the Force which he has the honour to Command.

G. P. DAWNAY, Bde. Head-quarters,

*For Major-General, Chief of the General Staff,
Egyptian Expeditionary Force.*

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APPENDIX IV

TRANSLATION OF PROPAGANDA PAMPHLET NOW BEING LEFT IN PROMINENT PLACES BY OUR PATROLS

ADVICE TO THE TURKISH ARMY

GOD created man, and respected him because, owing to his intellect, he was superior to animals.

Every man, before he sets out to do a thing, should consider whether it is a good or a bad thing.

We English look upon the Turkish soldier as a highly civilised European, whereas the "Union Committee" and Germany are treating you as machines.

Brothers—

We call you Brothers because, like ourselves, you are only human, and we realise that you are being wronged, and we want to point out to you that by allying yourselves to the "Union Committee" and the German Nation you are not only harming yourselves, but also betraying your parents and your homes.

Every fighting man should understand what he is fighting for. You perhaps think that you are fighting to protect your religion because it is endangered. Our reply is, that your religion is in no danger.

It is a well-known fact, which you also realise, that millions of Mahommedans have allied themselves to us because they know that we respect their laws and religion, and they look to us to protect them and their religion from Germany and her Allies. The best proof of this is the fact that the Sherif of MECCA defeated troops of the "Union Committee," and has become King of the Mahommedans' Holy Land, because he knows that the "Union Committee" look upon Mahommedans as infidels.

Perhaps you think you are fighting for the Sultan. We trust that no one in your Empire is ignorant of the fact that the "Union Committee" have deprived him of all the power which he had, so much so that he cannot marry any of the Princesses without the permission of the "Union Committee."

The unfortunate Sultan has always suffered ; ABDUL HAMID was imprisoned during his reign, and the " Union Committee " gained more power than the Sultan, if the Sultan. . . .

ENVER PASHA is a mere machine dictated to by the " Union Committee." Can you recollect the murder of YOUSSEF EFFENDI—Ezel Dine, the Viceroy of the Ottoman Crown—he it was who wanted to save the Empire from the Germans, who are now ruining it ?

Do not imagine that you are fighting for your country or your families, you are fighting to destroy your own homes.

Germany is infested with famine. All the produce of your country is being taken to Germany, and your families are being left to starve.

Germany offered to make Peace with us, but we refused, as we know we shall win ultimately, as our troops are increasing daily, and theirs are decreasing.

You've had a sample of our fighting during the last month, and experienced a defeat when you attempted to reach CAIRO, when thousands of your men were killed.

We have occupied BAGDAD, BEERSHEBA, and PALESTINE, capturing thousands of your men and guns.

All the World hates Germany, and has declared war on her, including the United States, Brazil, Cuba, Panama, San Salvador, China, etc., etc.

We English believe that, having read this document, you will see that you are being unjustly treated and forced to fight against us for Germany's ends, who instituted the " Union Committee."

We are only fighting to save you from Germany, who we mean to cripple.

Our advice to you is to end this struggle by giving yourselves up to us without fighting.

Your friends will have told you how well we treat our prisoners.

This is our message to you, and we trust you will consider it and act on it.

APPENDIX V

TRANSLATION OF ULEMA OF MECCA'S PROCLAMATION NOW POSTED UP IN MOST OF THE SURROUND- ING VILLAGES

" A MESSAGE FROM THE POETS OF HOLY MECCA TO THE MAHOMMEDAN WORLD "

AFTER several quotations from the Koran. All the home families of the Ottoman Empire have been governed by a party we (the Cherif) have never been in connection with, and the tenets of our religion forbid us to have anything to do with them.

The Ottomans believe that they are the descendants of Mahomet and his prophets. A great number of Mahommedans have been trained for the war, offering themselves to death without any interest or reason for war.

Does any one of you know why you have been called upon to perish ?

One of our representatives, lately returned from CONSTANTINOPLE, says : If you visit CONSTANTINOPLE you will see that our Capital is empty of men, and the Offices, Banks, and Ministries are full of women with bared faces who meet and talk with the people who our religion forbids us to serve.

Oh, Mahommedans ! have you ever heard in Mahomet's laws that a woman should bare her face and work in an office ?

We have now expelled the foe from the LORD's Land, and we assure you that there is no man in our Land more holy or sincere than the Son of the LORD, the present King who temporarily rules Mahommedans till the end of the war.

SIGNED BY THE 36TH POET OF MECCA.

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